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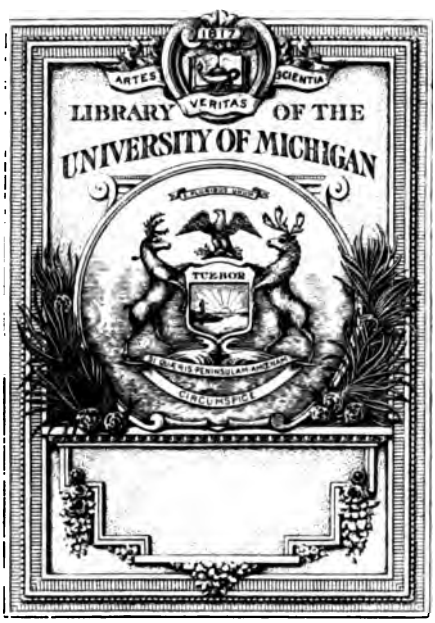
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A HISTORY

OF

GREEK LITERATURE.



A COMPANION VOLUME.

A HISTORY OF ROMAN LITERATURE:

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE TIMES OF THE ANTONINES.

BY

CHARLES THOMAS CRUTTWELL, M.A.,

FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD; HEAD MASTER OF MALVERN COLLEGE.

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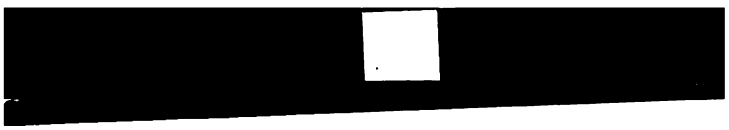
The Death of Demosthenes.

BY

FRANK BYRON JEVONS, M.A.,

TUTOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM.

NEW YORK:
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.
1892.





TO

THE VENERABLE H. W. WATKINS, D.D.,

CANON AND ARCHDEACON OF DURHAM,

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM,

This Work

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.

THIS, like the preceding volume in this series, "is designed mainly for Students at our Universities and Public Schools, and for such as are preparing for the Indian Civil Service or other advanced Examinations." But it is also intended to be intelligible, and, it is hoped, will be found interesting to those who know no Greek. With this purpose, Greek and all points involving Greek scholarship have been relegated to the Notes and Appendices.

A list of the works consulted and utilised in writing this book would occupy many pages. To note on each page, in the German fashion, every obligation and reference would swell the work to twice its present size. I must therefore content myself with saying that I have endeavoured to draw n all the best treatises on the subject in English, French, and German. Much, especially of the German work, deals with isolated points: the principles which determined the growth of Greek literature



have been comparatively neglected by previous writers. The present effort may, I hope, contribute towards remedying this neglect.

I am indebted for valuable guidance to my former tutor, H. Richards, Esq., M.A., Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, and to J. T. Danson, Esq., F.S.A.

F. B. J.

University College, Durham,
July 1886

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A

HISTORY OF GREEK LITERATURE.

INTRODUCTORY.

CLASSICAL Greek Literature begins with Homer, and ends practically, if not precisely, with the death of Demosthenes. During this period Greece was free. With the loss of liberty, literature underwent a change. Greece ceased to produce men of genius, and this constitutes one difference between the classical and later periods. A second great difference is that whereas the literature of the classical period was written not only by Greeks, but for Greeks, later literature was cosmopolitan; and to this change in the literature corresponds the change in the language, which from pure Greek became Hellenistic Greek. The earliest period of Greek literature is, then, classical because it is the work of genius, and is due solely to Greek genius. It reflects Greek life and expresses Greek thoughts alone, and, like the language in which it is clad, contains no foreign elements.

Classical Greek literature is the proper introduction to literature generally, because in it the laws which determined its development are simple, and can be easily traced. It was pure and original, and its development, unlike that of subsequent literatures, was not complicated by the influence of a foreign literature. Further, the various kinds of literature, poetry and prose, epic, lyric, and the drama, history, philosophy, and oratory, not only remained true, each to its own type, but on the whole they developed in orderly succession. This was because they were the work of different members of the Greek race, whose latent literary tendencies required different political and social conditions to draw them out. They were evoked one after the other by political and social changes; and so the stages

in the development of literature correspond with those of the nation's life. The growth of *Epic poetry*, the earliest form of the literature which has bequeathed remains to us, was favoured by a stage of civilisation in which patriarchal monarchy formed the political machinery, and family life furnished the society and the literary public. *Lyric*, the next branch of literature, found favouring conditions in the aristocracies which succeeded to monarchy, and in which the social communion of the privileged class took the place of family life, and provided a new public for literature. The *Drama* was designed for the entertainment of large numbers of persons, and was a response to the demands of democracy. From this time on, literature no longer found its home in the halls of chieftains, or its audience in the social meetings of the few; but when the state came to consist of the whole of the citizens, literature became united with the life of the state as a whole, and thenceforward was but one of the ways in which that life expressed itself. Literary men were not a class distinguished by their profession from the rest of the community, nor was literature a thing apart from the practical matters of life. The *Orators* were active politicians or men of law; and their speeches were not literary displays, but had a practical object, to turn the vote of the Assembly, or to gain a verdict. *History* was the record of a contemporary war, or of a war which had occurred in the previous generation. *Philosophy* was but a picture in words of the conversations between cultivated Greeks on the great problems of life. The drama was not a mere literary entertainment: it was an act of common worship, in which the genius of man was devoted to the glory of the gods.

In this book we shall follow the divisions into which Greek literature naturally falls, and shall complete our survey of each branch of literature before proceeding to another. This method is not absolutely chronological, for the divisions overlap to a certain extent; but it gives a simpler account, and in reality a truer view of the history, than we should obtain by following out chronological distinctions to the uttermost. Our division then will be as follows:—In the first place, as the rise of poetry preceded that of prose, we shall divide the history of Greek literature into two parts, the first containing the history of poetry, the second of prose. Then the first part will fall into three divisions—(1.) Epic; (2.) Lyric; (3.) The Drama: and the second will also fall into three divisions—(1.) History; (2.) Philosophy; (3.) Oratory.

Our account of Epic poetry will begin with Homer. Other

poets must have lived before Homer, and must have carried the development of poetry to a considerable height before such works as the Iliad and Odyssey could have been composed. But as there is not a vestige of this pre-Homeric poetry left, we shall proceed at once to Homer; and before considering the question whether there was such a person as Homer, we must try to gain some idea of what there is in the Iliad and Odyssey which places them among the world's greatest literary treasures, and which could make Keats, who only knew the poems through an inferior English version, say on first looking into Chapman's Homer—

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez—when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific, and all his men
> Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
> Silent upon a peak in Darien."





Part I.

EPIC AND LYRIC POETRY: THE DRAMA.

BOOK I.

EPIC POETRY.

CHAPTER I.

THE ILIAD.

WHATEVER may have been the authorship, origin, original form, and date of the Homeric poems, the fact remains that it is in their present form that they have commanded the admiration of men for more than two thousand years, have been the model for epic poetry, the inspiration of poets of all kinds, and have made the name of Homer greater than any name in literature. Therefore, before dissecting the poems of Homer, or rather vivisecting them, for they yet live, let us admire the beauty of their form, the firmness of their outlines, the purity of their Greek features, and the soul which gives expression to them. And this we may do without pre-judging any of the questions to which these poems have given rise; for those who advocate the hypothesis of several authors are as warm in the praise of our existing Homer, as are the supporters of Homer's undivided authorship. Indeed, the example of the frieze of the Parthenon and some of our own cathedrals shows that a work of art may possess unity of design and harmony in details, and yet be the work of not one artist, but several.

Confining ourselves in this chapter to the Iliad, let us first admire the skill with which the background is painted in. The subject of the Iliad, the wrath of Achilles and its consequences, is but an incident in the story of the Trojan war. Achilles and Agamemnon quarrelled before the walls of Troy, as we are informed at the beginning of the first book; but the reader has to be informed how it came about that Achilles and Agamemnon were besieging Troy, and this is the story of the Trojan war, which is presupposed by and forms the background

of the Iliad. In the same way every plot, whether of an epic, or a drama, or a novel, presupposes a state of things existing before the action begins; and the way in which the author contrives to acquaint the reader with this state of things, in other words to paint in the background, gives us a test of his skill.

1. The simplest and most inartistic way is that adopted by Euripides in many of his plays. Before the drama begins, one of the characters, or even a figure who does not appear in the play itself, comes on the stage, and, speaking to the audience, tells them what they have to imagine in order to understand what is going to be done on the stage. This is the most inartistic, because the pleasure one gets from seeing a play depends on the illusion—depends, that is to say, on our believing for the time that what we see performed before us is real: and in the prologues of Euripides the author practically comes forward and disenchants us by warning us that what is going to come is only a play. In a novel, too, the author may begin at the beginning and tell us methodically from point to point all that his story presupposes; and then, having got this preliminary matter out of the way, proceed with his real subject. But this method is usually repulsive to the reader, whose interest is not awakened, and he puts down the book.

2. The next and more usual way of painting in the background is to begin with the real subject, at the point the author thinks most attractive; and then, after having gained the reader's attention, to go back to the beginning of things and explain the circumstances in which his characters find themselves. This is more artistic than the first way, though how much more depends on the artist. It may be done clumsily, the author without any excuse simply saying in effect, "Now let us retrace our steps, and see how this came about;" or it may be done more skilfully, as when the author arranges things so that one of the characters naturally relates the antecedent circumstances for the benefit of another character. Thus, in the Æneid, Virgil begins with a storm at sea which throws Æneas on the coast of Carthage; and the Queen of Carthage naturally wishes to know the history of the stranger, who then relates at great length all that is necessary for the reader to know in order to comprehend the story of the Æneid. Even here there are degrees of skill, for in some cases it is evident that the antecedent state of things is narrated by one character to another, not in the least because he would do so in real life, but because the information must be given to the reader somehow.

To make the characters talk *at* the reader in this way is bad workmanship.

3. There is yet a third way of painting in the background. It consists in making the plot itself disclose what it presupposes, in not telling the reader, but allowing him to infer how what he sees has come about. This is the best way, not because it is most natural, but because it most resembles nature. It is not the method which most naturally suggests itself to the author; but it is the way in which the spectator of a scene in real life, enacted by people unknown to him, gains the knowledge necessary for a comprehension of the scene. This, as it is the best, is also the most difficult method. To construct scenes which shall be necessary to the plot, and yet at the same time shall serve the purpose of conveying information to the reader, demands great power in the artist.

It is the third method, needless to say, which is acted on in the Iliad. At the beginning of the epic we are simply told that Achilles and Agamemnon, being Achæans, quarrelled about a captive, Briseïs. That they were at the time beleaguering Troy, we incidentally learn from the words of Briseïs' father, who prays that the Achæans may succeed in capturing Troy, if only they will restore him his daughter. Why the Achæans are besieging Troy we are not formally told, but some light is given us when, in the heat of the angry quarrel, Achilles says he is here for no advantage of his own, but of Menelaus and Agamemnon, to gain recompense for them. Evidently, then, the two sons of Atreus are besieging Troy to right some wrong they have suffered, and Achilles and others are there to help them. The hint thus afforded is confirmed, and the information developed, when in the first engagement we observe Menelaus single out one of the Trojan warriors and challenge him to the fight, with the remark, "Thou mayst see what sort of warrior is he whose lovely wife thou hast." Then during the preparations for the duel, the cause of the Trojan war, the carrying off of Helen by Paris, naturally comes out; and the picture of the state of things presupposed is completed by the appearance of Helen herself.

Meanwhile, in other respects the setting of the scene has been proceeded with. The forces on both sides are mustered before our eyes, and we discover that the siege has endured for full nine years. But this information is not conveyed directly to, nor by talking at, the reader: it comes out in the necessary course of the action. The general attack, which Agamemnon has been delusively encouraged by Zeus to deliver, affords a

natural opportunity for giving a list of the Achæans who took part in this great war, and of their opponents. The same incident, too, is utilised as a means of allowing the reader to discover the length of time which the siege has lasted, and the hardships it has entailed. Before venturing to make a movement of such importance, Agamemnon resolves to try a ruse and prove his army's mettle by proposing to abandon the siege, inasmuch as nine years have been fruitlessly spent on it. The readiness which the people show in accepting the offer demonstrates the sufferings they had undergone, and the omen of the sparrow and her eight young ones devoured by a serpent, an omen boding the capture of Troy after nine years' siege, further impresses the reader with the number of the years.

There remains yet one more point to be noticed here before we dismiss the subject of the skill with which Homer paints in his background. It is a point of much importance, and has been sometimes overlooked. In the fighting which followed on the violation of the truce, and in which Diomede displayed his valour, when the Achæans are wavering, Here upbraids them thus:—"Fie upon you! . . . While yet noble Achilles entered continually into battle, then issued not the Trojans even from the Dardanian gate; for they had dread of his terrible spear."[1] This passage, which is corroborated by others (v. 788, ix. 352, xv. 721), shows that we are to suppose the Trojans as confined to their lines for the first nine years. Now that Achilles is no longer against them, they venture forth: and this is important, not only because occurring, as the first passage does, in a book devoted to the prowess of Diomede, it keeps the attention of the reader to the absence of Achilles and the consequences of his absence, but also because, if we overlook this aspect of the circumstances preceding the action of the Iliad, we fail to understand that the total result of the first day's fighting, though indecisive in itself, is yet, compared with the previous state of things, most encouraging to the Trojans.

Having examined the background of the Iliad, let us turn now to the plot itself. "Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, the ruinous wrath that brought on the Achaians woes innumerable." In these, the opening words of the Iliad, we have the subject fully stated; the poem is the story of Achilles' wrath and its consequences. The plot is the way in which the wrath was aroused, displayed, and finally exhausted.

[1] Here and throughout the translations are from the excellent versions of the Iliad by Messrs. Lang, Leaf, and Myers; of the Odyssey, by Messrs. Butcher and Lang.

If now we examine the Iliad we shall find there is little in it that was not designed—whether by a single original author, or by the authors of subsequently added books—for the purpose of carrying forward the plot. Given the subject, different authors might work it out in different ways, might imagine different causes for the quarrel, different forms for Achilles' anger to take, and different modes of terminating it. But in the Iliad there are no traces of any differences on any of these points. The plot is one and the same throughout. The cause of the quarrel is always the unfair and dishonouring treatment of Achilles by Agamemnon in the matter of Briseïs; the form which Achilles' anger takes is always abstention from assisting the Achæans; and the resolution of the entanglement is always the death of Patroclus, and the consequent renunciation by Achilles of his punitive inaction.

Let us now examine the plot a little more closely, and see how the details fit in with the main outline of the story, and are necessitated by it and by each other. Achilles complains to Thetis of the wrong put on him, and she obtains from Zeus a promise that the Achæans shall suffer for their conduct. This promise dominates the whole story, there is no hint of any other reason for the general reverse—in spite of temporary successes—of the Achæans; and from this interference of Zeus, which is implied by the whole of the Iliad, flow the events of the first day's fighting. That these events might have been framed differently by the poet is true, but this does not show that they were originally conceived by him in some other way. The cause, the exhibition, and the termination of Achilles' anger, might have been worked out in a manner different from that in which they have actually been developed. But no one argues from this that they were originally developed differently; and the reason is that the actual treatment of any one of these points is consistent with itself, and harmonises with the rest. So too the events of the first day's fighting. The deceitful dream sent by Zeus induces Agamemnon to make a general attack, which he prefaces by proving the spirit of his men; and the Trojans are encouraged by the intervention of Zeus to accept the engagement. Thus Paris and Menelaus are brought face to face: the duel naturally and its consequences necessarily follow. If the duel had been fought out, and its terms acted on, the war would have ended, and Zeus' promise would have been broken. The treachery of Pandarus, therefore, and a general engagement were necessitated by the duel.

The other incidents which belong to this the first day of fighting, the second of the Iliad's action, follow from the promise of Zeus, and are implied by what happens after them, as well as by the state of things which is represented as existing at the moment when the Iliad begins. That is to say, the fighting is necessitated by the treachery of Pandarus (which is referred to several times, v. 206, vii. 69 and 351); disaster to the Achæans is involved by the promise of Zeus; while the overwhelming numbers of the Achæans (ii. 123 ff.), and the nine years' terror of the Trojans, made it impossible for the poet to represent the Achæans as suffering a crushing defeat the very first time they met their foes in the open field. In these considerations we find the explanation and justification of the books which relate the prowess of Diomede. On the one hand, the promise of Zeus made it imperative that the Achæans should suffer defeat; on the other, the demands of probability and consistency required that the promise of Zeus should be, if not overridden, at least to some extent thwarted: and the solution of this difficulty was found in the intervention of the deities that sided with the Achæans—an intervention which showed itself in supporting Diomede.

Thus the appearance of Diomede rests on conceptions which are at the very foundation of the plot. On the appearance of Diomede depend the departure of Hector for Troy to institute prayers for his repulse, the meeting of Hector and Andromache, and the contrasted scene between Hector, Paris, and Helen. All these incidents derive their connection with the plot from the exploits of Diomede, as the latter in their turn derive much of their æsthetic value from the fact that the former depend on them. The next event, the single combat between Hector and Ajax, does not flow from the exploits of Diomede, but serves to impress the same conclusion on the reader, viz., that the Trojans, who had long been inferior to the Achæans, were now proving a match for them.

But for the Trojans merely to prove a match for the Achæans was no fulfilment of the promise made by Zeus to Thetis. Thanks to the prowess of Diomede and the intervention of some of the gods, the Achæans had by no means suffered so severely as the wrath of Achilles and the promise of Zeus demanded. It became necessary, therefore, for Zeus to intervene in a yet more decided manner; and the angry speech in which he forbids any of the gods to assist the Achæans was necessitated by what had occurred, and shows the close connection between this part of the Iliad and the preceding books. The



success which Zeus now interferes to secure to the Trojans, sufficient to make Agamemnon desire once more the services of Achilles, but not sufficiently overwhelming to satiate Achilles' wrath, naturally results in the embassy to the offended hero, which as naturally fails. The episode known as the *Doloneia* — filling the Tenth Book has no connection with the plot. But in the Eleventh Book we begin to see what is an essential part of the subject of the Iliad, the "woes innumerable" entailed by the wrath of Achilles. One after the other, Agamemnon, Diomede, and Ulysses, as well as inferior Achæan chieftains, are wounded and have to retire from the fray. What Achilles had prayed for was beginning to come to pass. Now he has the Achæans on the hip: when they came to him before, they did not understand the fury of his resentment. And this was but the earnest of what was to come; for the Trojans attacked the wall which the Achæans, thus practically acknowledging their inferiority, had built at the end of the first day's fighting to protect their ships.

But though the cup of victory seemed so near the Trojans' lips, it was not to reach them. To represent the Achæans so long masters of the field, as yielding all the time and making no stand, was alike opposed to probabilities and to the poet's patriotism. The necessity for their ill-success was the will of Zeus, and the only power capable of even temporarily opposing the father of gods and men was to be found in Poseidon, the brother, and Here the sister-wife of Zeus. This agency is accordingly set in action; and the tide of Trojan victory, which threatened to be unbroken and monotonous, is checked for a time, until Zeus again interferes, and once more the tide rolls on. Achilles is so far satisfied with the sufferings of the Achæans—for now his wrath had, as the proem of the Iliad summarises it, "hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, and given their bodies to be a prey to dogs and all winged fowls"—that he is willing to allow Patroclus to assume his armour and fight for the Achæans. After this the plot moves rapidly and easily. Patroclus is slain: the loss of Achilles' armour, the lending of which to Patroclus had been suggested as far back as the Tenth Book by Nestor, necessitates the making of new armour, and the vengeance which Achilles must take compels him, reluctantly enough, to submit to reconciliation with Agamemnon.

With the death of Hector at the hands of Achilles, the action of the Iliad is sometimes said to be ended. But a little reflection will show us that this is not quite the case. In order to

be able to avenge the death of Patroclus, Achilles desired the Achæans to move against the Trojans; but this could only be done by the order of Agamemnon, and before giving this order Agamemnon insists on Achilles accepting the gifts he had already offered. Achilles allows them to be thrust on him,—plainly because he cares for nothing but vengeance, not because his feeling against Agamemnon has died out entirely. The feeling of wrath is outweighed, not banished, by the desire of revenge; and it is only in the Twenty-third Book that we find the wrath of Achilles finally banished from his bosom. In that book, at the end of the funeral games held in honour of Patroclus, Achilles makes an opportunity of paying Agamemnon a courteous compliment, which shows his resentment to be ended as plainly as, in the so-called reconciliation of a previous book, his behaviour showed that he still harboured some feeling of resentment.

The last book of the Iliad cannot be said to be indispensable to the action or the plot; the subject of the epic, the wrath of Achilles, is exhausted. But for the interest, for the character-drawing, and on Aristotle's principle that an epic must have, as well as a beginning and middle, an end, the Twenty-fourth Book is indispensable.

Having examined the structure, and seen the essential unity of the plot, and having admired the way in which Homer conveys to the reader's mind the state of things which must be supposed as preceding the action of the Iliad, we may now consider the skill with which he dismisses the subject, as it were. The state of things which ensues on the story has to be indicated, as well as that which precedes it; in other words, the background has to be completed. This is done inartistically by Euripides in some plays by means of an epilogue, in which the author explains the subsequent fate of his characters—thereby admitting that his play is not complete and satisfactory in itself, that, in Aristotle's words, it has not an end. Now although in the Iliad the subject proper, the wrath of Achilles, is brought to a full, satisfactory, and tragic termination, there are things which cannot come to an end within the limits of the action, which yet the reader wishes to be satisfied about. The interest inspired by Hector is naturally terminated within the limits of the plot, because it is part of the plot that he should be killed. But the fate of Troy, which the story makes a point of interest, by the conditions of the plot cannot form part of the plot. Still more is the reader anxious to know the fate of Achilles; and we have now to admire the skill with which the poet satis-

fies these natural demands, without violating the laws of illusion as the epilogues of Euripides violate them.

With consummate art Homer anticipates the feelings which will be roused in the reader. Instead of waiting till interest and curiosity are aroused, and then providing the answer, he gives the information at once. Two advantages obviously result from this: in the first place, to wait for the curiosity to be aroused, and then to provide the answer, would be as though the subsequent events were not really the consequences of the action, but had been invented by the author to satisfy the reader—a violation of the laws of illusion which one feels in the termination of many novels. In the next place, by providing the solution along with the problem, Homer prevents the reader's attention from being distracted from the action of the book to side issues. As an illustration we may take the fate of Troy. As soon as we have been placed in full possession of the causes of the Trojan war, have seen Helen, Paris, and Menelaus, have seen the forces mustered on both sides, and have had our sympathies with the Trojans awakened by Hector and Andromache, at once the question of the fate of Troy is settled, and speculations on the subject precluded, by means of the gods in the Fourth Book. Zeus pretends to be thinking of allowing the duel between Paris and Menelaus to put an end to the war, in which case "the city of King Priam may yet be an habitation, and Menelaus take back Helen of Argos." But although he regrets that Troy must be sacked, he gives Here permission to do as she is minded, and destroy the place. And the destruction of Troy is felt all through the Iliad to be certain and imminent. The omen of the sparrow and her eight young ones, indicating the success of the Achæans in the tenth year, the confidence of Diomede that Troy is doomed, when Agamemnon proposes to fly in consequence of the abortive embassy to Achilles; and in the Fifteenth Book the express declaration of Zeus that Achilles shall rout the Trojans "until the Achaians take steep Ilion;" all are touches painting in this necessary feature of the background.

The fate of Achilles, which was more certain even than the fate of Troy to rouse the reader's interest, is another necessary feature of the background, and the skill with which it is painted in is great. At first the indications of it are only slight: his death looms at no great distance. But as the story goes on, and as the figure of Achilles becomes more and more the centre of the action and the interest, the death which dogs his footsteps becomes clearer and clearer to our eyes. In the First Book, as

soon as the quarrel is over, Achilles' words to Thetis, "Mother, seeing thou didst of a truth bear me to so brief span of life," show us dimly what is to happen. When Achilles next appears upon the scene, in the Ninth Book, the figure of death takes a clearer shape. Achilles says to Ulysses, "If I abide here and besiege the Trojans' city, then my returning home is taken from me, but my fame shall be imperishable; but if I go home to my dear native land, my high fame is taken from me, but my life shall endure long while, neither shall the issue of death soon reach me." Thus his death is to be not only soon, but during this Trojan war. When Achilles, in the Eighteenth Book, is about to take vengeance on Hector, his death is yet more sharply defined. Thetis says to him, "Straightway after Hector, is death appointed unto thee." Then the mode of death is vaguely brought before our eyes when Achilles says to Polydorus, "My life, too, some man shall take in battle, whether with spear he smite or arrow from the string." Soon this too becomes clearer, for in the Twenty-first Book the hero says, "Under the wall of the mail-clad men of Troy I must die by the swift arrows of Apollo." Last, in the next book, the dying Hector warns his slayer "of the day when Paris and Phœbus Apollo slay thee, for all thy valour, at the Skaian gate."

Is it necessary to dilate on this perfect piece of art? What to other writers would have been a stumbling-block, Homer makes into an ornament and a support. The death of Achilles has nothing to do with the plot of the Iliad; it is a side-issue which must be disposed of somehow; and it is further a side-issue which threatened to ruin the unity of the epic by becoming more interesting than the proper subject, by thrusting the latter into a secondary and itself taking the first place. The side-issue is allowed to develop all its strength and then made to strengthen the main plot. Whenever Achilles appears before the reader, it is to the accompaniment of these funeral notes. They mark his presence on the stage as in a work of Wagner's a "motive" marks a character's appearance. As the interest of the subject increases, and as the action advances, these notes become louder and louder, until the climax of the excitement is reached and the crescendo ends with Hector's dying prophecy in a final and terrible crash.



CHAPTER II.

THE ODYSSEY.

THE Odyssey has been more popular in modern times than the Iliad. This is doubtless partly due to its being domestic and not military in its subject. Descriptions of fighting done with obsolete weapons have mainly but an antiquarian interest; and the various kinds of wounds and various modes of shedding blood have less charm for an industrial and domestic society than have the sufferings of a faithful wife. The domestic interest is indeed present in the Iliad, and Hector and Andromache, for that reason, tended in the Middle Ages to come to be regarded as the leading characters and the central interest of the Iliad—a wholly false conception of the epic. Another reason for the popularity in modern times of the Odyssey is that the poem contains fairy tales. Ogres and ogresses, the floating island of Æolus, the marvellous bag containing the winds, Scylla and Charybdis, the descent into the realms of the dead, the enchanted isles of Circe and Calypso, the one-eyed giant, are all tales which exercise now, as they seem to have done from the earliest Aryan times, an inexhaustible influence over the popular fancy. A third reason for the popularity of the Odyssey is that, in addition to the poetry with which all these tales are invested, they are woven with consummate artistic skill into a single whole.

Let us now see wherein the unity of the Odyssey, as we have it, consists; for that it possesses unity is universally admitted, though it is disputed whether this unity is the deliberate design of one artist, or the result of the labours of successive generations of poets working at the same subject. The theme of the Odyssey is as simple as that of the Iliad: the one is the wrath of Achilles and its consequences, the other is the return of Odysseus home. As Aristotle says (*Poetics*, 17), the argument of the Odyssey is slight: a man being away from home for many years, things at home fall into such a condition that his substance is devoured by suitors, and plots are formed against his son; at length, after a stormy voyage, the hero comes home, and having revealed himself to a few people and having attacked the suitors, comes off safe himself and kills his enemies. Everything else is episode. But these episodes are woven—whether by one poet or more—so skilfully into the narrative, that if envious Time had robbed us of the Iliad and left us

only the Odyssey, there never, in all probability, would have arisen the question whether the Homeric poems are the work of one author or more.

As in the Iliad, so in the Odyssey, there are at the beginning of the epic several books which do not advance the action of the poem, but depict the state of things preceding it and serve as an exposition. The first four books of the Odyssey contain the journey of Telemachus to Pylos and Sparta in quest of news of his father. In them Telemachus is the principal figure, and they have in consequence been called the *Telemachia*. From these books, as from certain books of the Iliad, the hero of the epic is absent. But in the Iliad the absence of Achilles is necessary, because the Greeks have to be made to feel the consequences of his wrath. In the Odyssey the absence of Odysseus from home is equally part of the theme of the poem; and for the interest of the poem it is necessary that the state of things in the hero's home should be depicted, so as to enlist the reader's sympathy with the hero in his struggles to return, and with the hero's wife and son in their longing for his return. The art with which both these objects are attained in the Telemachia hardly needs pointing out. The insolence of the suitors is brought into high relief by the device of bringing Athene on the scene in the guise of a stranger: the impression made on the seeming stranger by the wantonness of the wooers is felt to be the judgment which any impartial and honest man would pass upon their conduct. Further, the evil character of the suitors comes out more and more, the more we see of them. The evil which they work is not confined, as it might be inferred from the First Book, to the house of Odysseus. In the Second Book we find in the assembly that they behave to the people of Ithaca as insolently as they treat Penelope and Telemachus; and finally, in the Fourth Book, they plot the death of the son while hoping by force to wed the mother, and they enjoy the humour of the situation.

By the side of this picture we have that of the faithful wife. This strand in the thread of the story runs through all the four books. It appears not only in the First Book, but in the Second Book, in the story of the unravelling of the web by night; and in Books iii. and iv. it is brought out by the contrast between Penelope and Clytemestra.[1] Attention should also be paid to the way in which, in the Telemachia, the news about Odysseus, vague at first, takes more and more definite

[1] This appears to be the correct way of spelling the name—not Clytemnestra.

shape as Telemachus proceeds with the inquiry, but stops when it reaches the point at which the action of the Odyssey begins.[1] At the beginning of Book i. no news is known to Telemachus of his father. Then, in disguise, comes Athene, who had seen Odysseus when he started for the war. Next, Nestor has seen him immediately after the war, but knows nothing more. Then Menelaus learnt from Proteus still later that Odysseus was confined in Calypso's isle, Ogygia.

This forms the exposition; and it is only when our interest and sympathy have been roused, when the distance of Odysseus from home has been impressed on us, and the desire awakened in us to know how he came to be in Ogygia, and how he is to come home, that the poet begins the tale of his wanderings and his adventures. The tales which are contained in this part of the Odyssey existed long before Homer's time, and among many other peoples than the Greeks. The story of the one-eyed giant is probably not of Aryan origin, for it is found among Esthonians and Basques, who lived in Europe long before their Aryan invaders came there. The transformation of men into beasts is a widely spread belief, and the tale of Circe in particular appears in the Sanskrit *Somadeva*, as does also the land of Phæacia; though, as the *Somadeva* was put together about 1200 A.D., these two tales may have travelled from Greece to India, as one of the tales in the *Hitopadeça* travelled from Hindostan to Alexandria by the caravan route, and became incorporated in the *Arabian Nights*. Mermaidens such as the Sirens, ogres and ogresses such as the Læstrygonians, the octopus which figures as Scylla, the clashing rocks which are known to the Aztecs, the descent into the realms of the dead, which is told by the South Sea Islanders, should all, probably, be regarded, not as the original invention of Homer, but as popular stories, *Märchen*, which the poet fused into the Odyssey.

We have now, however, not to trace the ultimate origin of these sagas, but to see how they are united into one poem along with the tale, which existed in other forms before it was attached to the name of Odysseus, of the hero who after long absence returned to his faithful wife. In one of these legends, that of the Cyclops, Odysseus acts in a manner unlike his usual

[1] This seems to indicate that the Telemachia probably never existed independently of the Odyssey. Why should a writer who had never heard of the Odyssey happen, when relating a voyage of Telemachus, to give just such information as is required for the understanding of the Odyssey, and then break off at the point where another poet, working independently, happened precisely to begin?

prudence; he deliberately courts misfortune and voluntarily enters the Cyclops' den. This was probably an essential feature in the popular tale; and Homer, in adopting the story, has retained this feature; but so far from leaving it as an unsightly inconsistency, he has turned it to advantage. This piece of folly in which Odysseus indulges is "the beginning of evil." It led to the blinding of the Cyclops, which provoked the wrath of Poseidon, and that was the cause of all Odysseus' wanderings. From the land of the Cyclops he was carried to the floating island of Æolus, but the safe return which the wonderful wallet might have procured for Odysseus was frustrated, evidently, as Æolus says, by the gods. After this indication of the nature of the power that was presiding over his course, it is not surprising that Odysseus should next lose all his ships but one among the Læstrygonians, and then be carried to the enchanted island of Circe. After his year's stay there, he is sent by Circe down to Hades, there to learn what wanderings destiny yet has in store for him. Thus his subsequent course does not appear to be the arbitrary arrangement of a poet working up given material, but has the seal of fate set on it by the appalling scene among the dead. From Circe's isle, Ææa, he sails by the Sirens, the Rocks Wandering, Scylla and Charybdis, and thus reaches the Island of the Sun. There his crew commit the offence they were warned against, and kill the sacred herds of Helios. Thus all his crew perished, and Odysseus alone was saved on Calypso's isle. There he spends eight years, until Athene pleads for him against Poseidon among the gods, and he is allowed to sail from Ogygia to the land of the Phæacians, not, however, without suffering wreck once more from Poseidon's power. From Phæacia he reaches Ithaca in safety.

We see, then, that the latter half of the hero's adventures are bound together by the utterance of the seer Teiresias in Hades, and that the descent to Hades was one of the consequences of the wrath of Poseidon. The direct intervention of this god occurs in the wreck of the raft on which Odysseus set sail from Ogygia, and the misfortunes of Odysseus generally are ascribed to Poseidon both by Teiresias and by Athene. But in most of the calamities that overtook Odysseus there is no special mention of Poseidon as the immediate cause. This has been regarded by some critics as a proof that in the original Odyssey there was a different conception of the cause of the hero's wanderings, and that the introduction of Poseidon is later than the "kernel" of the Odyssey. But this theory pro-



ceeds on the tacit assumption that if the adventures of Odysseus had been composed by the same poet who wrote the Telemachia and the last twelve books, and who ascribed the adventures and misfortunes of Odysseus to Poseidon's anger, he would in relating each of them have specially mentioned Poseidon as the cause. But of this there is no proof, and it may be questioned whether the continued introduction of Poseidon, time after time, would not have been monotonous and inartistic. The popular stories which Homer wove into the Odyssey had originally no connection with Odysseus, and therefore none with Poseidon; and so far the importation of Poseidon into them is later than the stories themselves. Possibly these stories had become popularly associated with the name of Odysseus before Homer wove them together by the device of making Poseidon the ultimate cause of all Odysseus' adventures. If this be so, the only question left is whether the poet has made it sufficiently clear that Poseidon was the cause; and inasmuch as he three times expressly and as it were officially—by the mouth of a goddess, of Teiresias and of Odysseus—declares that Poseidon *was* the cause, and twice introduces Poseidon as directly intervening, it seems to be hypercriticism to require more, and to ascribe some of the work to one author and the rest to another, because the poet has not labelled each and every story with the signature of Poseidon.

The fairyland adventures of Odysseus, then, have all the unity with each other which stories of such diverse origin could have. Their connection with the rest of the Odyssey is even closer. The Telemachia and the Thirteenth Book both ascribe these adventures to the action of Poseidon. Teiresias in Hades prophesies the destruction which overtakes the wooers in the later books. The appearance of the ghost of Anticleia in Hades is confirmed by the mention of her death in the later books. Further, the fidelity of Penelope is a feature common to all three divisions of the Odyssey. It is brought out in the same way, that is, by pointed contrast with the conduct of Clytemestra, in all three; and the happiness of Arete and Nausicäa in their home in Phæacia can scarcely be an accidental contrast to the sufferings of Penelope in her home in Ithaca. Finally, the summary which Odysseus gives to Penelope of his adventures confirms the account in Books v. to xii.

Thus Books v.–xii. are dominated by the same conception of the cause of Odysseus' wanderings and of the state of things in Ithaca as is the rest of the Odyssey. We have now to consider

the skill with which the climax of the Odyssey is wrought out in Books xiii.–xxiv., and with which these books are interwoven with the Telemachia. Telemachus having been sent by Athene to Sparta, is recalled by her to Ithaca, and, in order to avoid the ambuscade of the suitors, is bidden to land, not at the city, but near the steading of Eumæus, the swineherd. Thus Telemachus is brought into the company of Odysseus, and the threads of the Telemachia and Books v.–xii. are united.[1] The next stage in the action is brought about very simply and artistically. Telemachus, with the same consideration for his mother's feelings as he displays in the Telemachia, where he takes steps to conceal his journey from her, sends Eumæus to the city to inform Penelope of his safe return. Thus the stage is cleared for the recognition of Odysseus. After this, Telemachus goes first, and Odysseus follows him to the city. The omens indicative of the vengeance that is nigh become more and more frequent, reaching their climax in the vision of Theoclymenus, a character that appears in the Telemachia as well as in Books xiii.–xxiv., and helps to unite these two parts of the Odyssey. While these tokens of the gods' will are manifesting themselves, the suitors are filling the measure of their wrong-doing by their fresh plot against the life of Telemachus, by their contumely towards the disguised Odysseus, in defiance of the protection which Zeus accords to strangers and beggars, and in strong contrast to the behaviour of Eumæus; while the universal misery and hatred which the wooers have excited is revealed in one marvellous flash, when at the dawn of the day of Odysseus' vengeance the woman at the mill prays to Zeus, "Fulfil now, I pray thee, even to miserable me, the word that I shall speak. They that have loosened my knees with cruel toil to grind their barley-meal, may they now sup their last." The crescendo of the wooers' crimes is common to the Telemachia and Books xiii.–xxiv.

The excitement of the plot is heightened by the fact that on the very day Odysseus enters his house in disguise, Penelope, having, in defiance of public opinion, refused for so long to wed, has, with infinite grief, resolved to make an end of her resistance to the suitors. Her husband had charged her to wait, if he did not return, no longer than till their son was a grown man: that time had come, and regard for her son's future prompted her to a decision. Thus she resolves on the trial of the bow;

[1] If the Telemachia did not form part of the original Odyssey, and Telemachus was not represented therein as making a voyage, his return to Ithaca is somewhat inexplicable.



and on that day Odysseus arrives. The situation is dramatic; but it is said by some critics that there are indications in the poem itself that this is not the tale as it was told in the original Odyssey. In the last book the ghost of Amphimedon ascribes the trial of the bow to the ingenuity of Odysseus, who suggested it to his wife in order to bring about the wooers' destruction. This, we are told, proves that, originally, Penelope was not about to succumb to the twenty years of weary waiting and hope deferred that she had suffered. The disguised Odysseus suggested, and she accepted it, as a means of further delay, since it was certain that none of the wooers could succeed in the trial. Thus there was originally no situation: things were going on much as usual, and there was no particular need for Odysseus to arrive at this time rather than any other. Consequently our admiration of the unity of the Odyssey is, at least as regards this point, misplaced, because here we have not unity, but discrepancy of design.

It does not, however, seem necessary to accept this conclusion. That Amphimedon, knowing nothing of the facts, should ascribe the conjunction of events which brought about the slaughter to the cunning of Odysseus is natural, and is consistent with the repeated tributes to the hero's cleverness which occur throughout the poem. To press the words further is unsafe, and we are not much encouraged to draw from them conclusions about the original form of the Odyssey, when we find that the passage in which they occur—the second Nekuia—is regarded by the same critics as having been introduced long after the original form of the Odyssey had been lost.

The unity of design in the later books of the Odyssey has also been attacked on other grounds. Athene, having transformed and re-transformed Odysseus, again gives him the appearance of a beggar, and in that disguise he goes to his home; is ill-treated by, and kills, the suitors. Then, without being changed back into his proper shape, he is recognised by Penelope. This fact—that Odysseus is not mentioned as being changed again into his real shape—is taken to show that originally there was no transforming of Odysseus at all. In the original Odyssey, the hero, aged and altered by years and suffering, was naturally protected from immediate recognition. But a later and more "reflective" age found a supernatural transformation necessary to account for the non-recognition of Odysseus by his son, wife, and servants; and so the original tale was patched with this view. But fortunately the original conception is still to be seen by seeing eyes. If Odysseus had originally and really been trans-

formed, then of course the scar on his leg would have been transformed too. But the scar on his leg was not transformed; he shows it to his father, to Eumæus, and to the neatherd, and Eurycleia discovered him by it; therefore Odysseus was not transformed in the original Odyssey. Consequently, instead of unity, we have again discrepancy of design; for these scenes are a patchwork combination of the work of two very different ages.

As these arguments have been put forward gravely, they must receive a grave answer; and we may say, first, that before Odysseus is recognised by Penelope, he is, as a matter of fact, re-transformed (xxiii. 156–163) by Athene. She does not, indeed, use her wand as she does in first transforming him, but to the gods all things are possible. Secondly, in all countries and literature, the supernatural and marvellous precede the employment of purely natural causes. Fairy tales come early, not late, in a nation's growth; so that if two versions of the story did exist, we should be justified in concluding that the version which contained a magic change was earlier than that which relied solely on the changes brought about by the natural operation of age and suffering. Thirdly, the subject of transformation is a difficult and obscure one. In one story the change seems to leave untouched at least the psychological identity of the person transformed; whereas in another a very simple measure of transformation is enough to cause the person concerned to ask, "Can this be I?" The limits within which are confined the changes wrought by transformation seem to be shifting, and to be so elastic that, if Homer says or implies that Odysseus was indeed transformed, but the transformation did not take effect upon his legs or the scars upon his legs, we may fortify ourselves by the analogy of the prince in the *Arabian Nights* (who conversely had his legs changed into black marble, but not the rest of his body), and take Homer's word for it.

Without here entering upon the question as to whether we have the "original" Odyssey or not, and, if not, how the changes that have been made *were* made, we may at least conclude that the traces of such changes are not considerable enough to affect the admiration which critics, from Aristotle onwards, have felt and expressed for the unity and dramatic interest of the Odyssey. It is better to profit by the beauty of the poem as we have it, than to bestow our admiration upon the Odyssey, "original" it may be, as constructed by some modern critics.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOMERIC QUESTION.

In very early times there seems to have been a "Homeric question," though it has very little in common with the Homeric question of modern times. From an early period any epic which pleased the popular fancy appears to have been ascribed to Homer, as any law at Athens which had anything to recommend it was ascribed by the orators to Solon. But in the course of time, and on grounds which, like the epics themselves, are lost to us, one epic after another was abjudicated from Homer, and the Iliad and Odyssey were the only epics of which Homer was allowed to be the author. But the process of separation did not stop here. Photius, a Patriarch of Constantinople, who died A.D. 891, quotes from a late writer named Proclus a statement to the effect that Xenon and Hellanicus denied that the Odyssey was by Homer. Of Xenon we know nothing (he is mentioned in one of the Scholia—Greek commentaries of various dates—to the Iliad, and that is all): Hellanicus was senior to the famous Alexandrian grammarian and Homeric critic, Aristarchus, whose date is about B.C. 222–150. The upholders of the view that the Iliad and the Odyssey were by different authors were called the *Chorizontes* or *Separatists*, and were combated by Aristarchus. In antiquity the theory was considered a paradox; and in modern times the question whether the two poems are by the same author has yielded to the question whether either poem is by a single author.

The arguments on which the ancient separatists proceeded were partly linguistic and partly mythological, so far as can be learnt from the scattered notices to be found in ancient Greek commentaries on the Iliad. As an example of their linguistic arguments, we may take that based on the use of the word *proparoithen*, "before." This word may be used, like the English "before," either of things in space or of things in time, and probably was first used of space, and subsequently extended to time. In the Iliad, the Chorizontes said, the word is used of space; in the Odyssey, of time. Obviously, therefore, language had undergone some development between the time when the Iliad and the Odyssey were written. But, as a matter of fact, the word is used of time in the Iliad as often as in the Odyssey—once in each poem. An instance of the arguments

drawn from mythology is the fact that in the Iliad Charis is the wife of Hephæstus; in the Odyssey, Aphrodite. This is undeniable; but in the "fluid" state in which mythology was in early times, the fact does not go for much. A stronger argument is that in the Iliad there is one Charis, in the Odyssey there are several Charites, which may indicate that the legend had undergone development, and thus point to a later origin for the Odyssey. Another mythological argument used by the ancient Chorizontes is that in the Iliad Iris appears as the messenger of the gods; in the Odyssey, Hermes. But the facts do not wholly bear out this argument; for although in the Iliad Iris is frequently the messenger, Hermes also acts on one important occasion in this capacity; while in the Odyssey, though Hermes appears once as messenger, the functions of Iris had certainly not died out of memory, as is shown by the jest of calling a beggar who ran messages Irus.[1]

In modern times the arguments of the ancient Chorizontes have been taken up for the purpose of showing that—whether each poem is by one, and only one, author or not—at any rate the Odyssey belongs to a later period than the Iliad. No one professes to assign much weight to the arguments used, though the conclusion is pretty generally accepted. That there are differences between the two poems is undisputed. The question is whether the differences are greater than the difference in subject naturally involves. "Minstrels" are frequently mentioned in the Odyssey, but are unknown in the Iliad. But minstrels were apparently the appanages of a court, not of a camp. In the Iliad the gods are much more violently opposed to each other than in the Odyssey, which shows a progress in religious sentiment. But the strife in Olympus gives majesty to the mortal conflicts of the Iliad, whereas in the Odyssey there is no such commotion on earth as to rouse war in heaven. Again, it is said that the Odyssey, dealing with the return from Troy, presupposes, and is therefore later than, the Iliad. The subject of the one certainly presupposes the other. But there is no reference in the Odyssey to the Iliad. The current mythology doubtless embraced the tales of the Trojan war and of the return of the Greeks before either Odyssey or Iliad was composed; and this is all that either presupposes. The Odyssey, again, is supposed to show development of legend; but the fluid state of myths and legends makes it quite possible that variants, or even different stages, of a legend's growth continued to exist side by side. Arguments have been drawn also from the differ-

[1] See Geddes, *Problem of the Homeric Poems*, 52–60.

ence in the vocabulary of the two poems, but little weight is usually given to them. Finally, geographical knowledge in the Odyssey is said to be wider, and consequently later, than that in the Iliad. But the Odyssey gives greater scope for the display of such knowledge; and the question is further complicated by the fact that passages which are quoted by the one side are rejected as interpolations by the other.

But the ancient doubts whether both the Odyssey and Iliad were by Homer have sunk into insignificance by the side of the modern doubts whether either the Iliad or the Odyssey is by Homer—whether there was ever such a person as Homer—whether either poem is by one author—whether the poems are not the fortuitous aggregate of unconnected ballads—whether they are of any antiquity at all. These difficulties, which constitute the modern Homeric question, were first definitely raised at the end of last century, and to Wolf is justly due the honour of having raised them.[1] Friedrich August Wolf was a professor in Halle, and being engaged on an edition of the Iliad, in his endeavours to gain a safe standing-ground from which to criticise various readings and to emend faulty readings, he was led to inquire of himself by what means the text of Homer had come down to us, and particularly how it had been transmitted in the earliest times. He found that not only, on the current view of the great antiquity of Homer, was it extremely difficult to account for the transmission of so extensive a text, but that the current view itself was based, as he supposed, on two impossibilities. First, it implies the existence of writing in Homer's time; next, it implies the absence of any difference between the state of nature existing in Homer's time and the artificial condition of later Greek civilisation.

In both these difficulties, which Wolf stated in his famous *Prolegomena* to Homer (1795), we see the influence of the general current of thought of the eighteenth century. "Nature" had been brought into very sharp contrast with the artificial complexity of modern civilisation by Rousseau, and the same contrast was sought for in the literature of early and "natural" times as compared with the productions of an advanced society.

[1] Before Wolf learned men had had transient doubts, *e.g.* Casaubon and Perizonius, whether the poems were originally committed to writing; Bentley, whether Homer intended the poems to be recited as wholes; an Italian scholar, Vico, had denied the existence of Homer; Wood (*Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer*, 1769) had raised the question of the antiquity of writing; Zoega (1788) had called attention to inconsistencies in the poems; and Herder and Heyne contributed to the comparative study of ballads and epics. But all these taken together do not impair the originality and magnitude of Wolf's achievement.

Works belonging to primitive times must, like the ballads of our own early literature, be short, simple, inartificial—in fine, natural. With the advance of society literary compositions became longer and more complex, and as the resources of art accumulated, works of art became more artificial. In the *Nibelungenlied* was found a parallel to Greek epics: the *Nibelungenlied* was demonstrated to have been made out of ballads, and the analogy was applied to the Homeric poems. With these views on the history of literature, there could be no hesitation in concluding that the Iliad and the Odyssey, in their present form, belong to the later and more complex period of literary development. Parts of each poem may belong to the simpler and earlier period, but they have evidently been overlaid by the work of the more artificial period.

The other difficulty which Wolf found in the way of the popular belief in the great antiquity of the poems as we have them, resulted from applying to the origin of the Homeric poems a question which was being put, with equally important results, in philosophy with regard to knowledge, viz., how is it possible? What are the conditions necessarily involved in the supposition that the poems existed in times of great antiquity? and did these conditions, as a matter of fact, exist? In the first place, the transmission of the poems for many centuries implies the existence of writing. But before, say, B.C. 700, writing did not exist in Greece. Either, then, the current view is wrong in attributing to the poems a greater antiquity than B.C. 700; or, if the poems did exist before that date, they must have been short and simple enough to be committed to memory and transmitted orally. And the latter hypothesis agrees with the view that the poems of early and natural times were simple and short.

But inasmuch as the evidence as to the date of the introduction of writing into Greece is scanty, Wolf brings forth another condition which is indispensable for the composition of such extensive works as the Iliad and the Odyssey, and could not have existed in the time of Homer. An artist must have a public. A poet writes to be published. Now, whatever the date at which writing was introduced into Greece, the habit of reading was not established until very late times. Homer, that is to say, composed to be recited and heard, not to be read. But no audience could sit through a reading of the Iliad or the Odyssey, each consisting of twenty-four books and over 9000 verses. Therefore, to the impossibility of carrying so long a work in the memory has to be added the impossibility of ever finding an audience for so long a poem. But if there was no

audience to be had for such a work, it is pretty certain that no such work would be composed. The length of a poem in those times must have depended on the conditions under which it was to be recited, and those conditions admitted of the recitation of short poems only. Indeed, we know, as a matter of fact, that in historic times, when Homer was recited at festivals, it was not the whole Iliad or the whole Odyssey that was given, but only short portions of them called rhapsodies.

We may, then, sum up Wolf's objections to the common view of the great antiquity of Homer thus: in their present condition the poems are not of the short and simple character which is the mark of early and natural literature, and they are too long to have been transmitted by memory or to have ever even found an audience. The conclusion he drew was that Homer—whose existence and genius he did not dispute—living in primitive times, before writing was in common use, and before the existence of a reading public, could not have composed the whole, but only parts, of the Iliad and Odyssey as we have them. The rest consists of additions made by various subsequent poets and professional reciters or rhapsodists. Which parts were by Homer and which by later hands, Wolf made no attempt to discover, although he lived for many years after framing his theory and publishing his *Prolegomena*.

There remains a third point to be noticed in Wolf's theory. If Homer did not commit his poems to writing, and if the present form of the Iliad and Odyssey is not due to Homer, by whom were the poems committed to writing, and to whom is their present form due? Wolf foresaw this difficulty and provided an answer. Pisistratus, the famous tyrant of Athens, first caused the poems to be committed to writing. He also united the poems, composed by different hands and recited individually, into the two great wholes now known as the Iliad and Odyssey. And this he did by means of a Commission of four "Diaskeuasts," whose names, according to Wolf, were Onomacritus, Orpheus of Croton, Simonides, and Anacreon. The evidence for these statements Wolf found in passages from Cicero,[1] Pausanias[2] (an antiquarian who flourished about A.D. 160), Ælian[3] (whose date is about A.D. 180), a Life of Homer[4] (author unknown, date late), and a grammarian, Diomedes[5] (very late). Although these writers disagree as to the reason why Pisistratus

[1] De Or. iii. 137, "primus Homeri libros, confusos antea, sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus."
[2] vii. 26.
[3] V. H. xiii. 14.
[4] In Westermann's Collection.
[5] In Villoison, Anecdota Græca, ii. 18a.

caused the poems to be edited into their present shape—some say it was because previously they had never been committed to writing, and that Pisistratus gave an obol for every line any one could provide; others, because the poems had suffered from fires, earthquakes, and floods, and were therefore much scattered[1] —still they all maintain the present form to be due to Pisistratus; and so closely does their language in this respect agree, that it seems probable they either copied from each other or from some common source. Since Wolf's time, on the strength of a passage in Tzetzes (a Byzantian grammarian, date about A.D. 1160), the names of the four Diaskeuasts have been given as Onomacritus, Orpheus, Zopyrus, and Epikonkylos (the last name is conjectural). But inasmuch as Tzetzes is separated by an interval of 1700 years from the time he was writing about, and is an inaccurate writer, we may dismiss him.

We have now to consider the worth of Wolf's authorities for the Commission of Pisistratus. In the first place, they are none of them sufficiently near in point of time to the period of Pisistratus to carry any great weight. Cicero, the earliest of them, lived 500 years after Pisistratus. How comes it that during those 500 years no author makes mention of so important a fact in literary history? Aristotle, who made extensive investigations into the history of literature, knows nothing of this Commission, or of any other form of Homer than that we possess. The Alexandrine critics of this period, who worked so much on Homer, know nothing of it. No allusion to it is to be found in Plato, none in the orators, who had various occasions in their speeches when they would gladly have claimed for Athens the distinction of such an important literary achievement had they known of it. It seems improbable that such a valuable piece of information should have escaped so many eager and competent students for half a millennium and then have been discovered by Cicero. A more reasonable explana-

[1] This must be placed to the credit of Diomedes, the grammarian. He too says that Pisistratus invited everybody who knew any Homer to contribute their information, and paid them so much a verse. The result was that some spurious verses—the work of those, we may conjecture, "qui lineâ denariâ scribebant"—were sent in, and they are now marked by an obelisk. Diomedes then proceeds to get confused apparently between the revision by Pisistratus and the Septuagint, for he says that Pisistratus formed a committee of seventy-two revisers (each paid an honorarium worthy of learned critics), who set to work separately on the material thus provided them, and then compared their results, and came to the conclusion that the best version was that produced by Aristarchus, the next best that of Zenodotus (Aristarchus and Zenodotus lived about 400 years after Pisistratus). This is interesting as a specimen of the worth of Byzantine learning.

tion is that it was unknown to them, because it was only invented after their time.[1]

The common source of all these stories seems to be an inscription quoted in an anonymous Life of Homer, and there said to have been taken from a statue of Pisistratus. The question then arises whether the inscription was taken from the statue of Pisistratus? In the first place, the Athenians' hatred of the Pisistratidæ makes it unlikely that any such statue was erected in memory of Pisistratus; and, in the next place, the words of the inscription are remarkable. "Thrice tyrant, thrice the populace of Athens expelled me, thrice recalled me, the great Pisistratus, who collected Homer, erewhile sung scatteredly," &c. It is improbable that, in an inscription intended to do honour to Pisistratus, his military achievements and his services to religion should be entirely omitted, while his repeated expulsions from Athens—important facts in his life, but not those which his heirs, wishing to remain tyrants of Athens, would care to have remembered—are dwelt upon. And what is the great achievement which, according to the inscription, outweighs all else that Pisistratus did, and is to constitute his political rehabilitation? A reform of the text of Homer. Assuming that this reform was the work of Pisistratus, we certainly never find it mentioned by any historian, orator, or other writer before Alexandrine times, either as an extenuating circumstance in Pisistratus' tyranny or in any other way. On the other hand, we know that the royal patronage extended in Alexandrine times by the Ptolemies to learning produced a reaction in favour of discerning tyrants, and that the composition of epigrams was a favourite exercise amongst the literary men of Alexandria. A service then to literature was precisely the one fact which an Alexandrine writer would regard as worth recording in an epigram on Pisistratus.

This is one suggestion as to the origin of the epigram and the stories based upon it. It seems, however, more plausible to trace the epigram to the rivalry which existed between the two great schools of learning, Alexandria and Pergamum. Cicero, in whom the story, as far as we can trace it, first appears, had but little acquaintance with Alexandrian learning. On the other hand, his education in Rhodes brought him under the

[1] The same line of argument may be applied to the statement that Onomacritus was one of the members of the Commission. If he was, how is it that Herodotus (vii. 6), who knows that Onomacritus "revised" many oracles in the interest of Pisistratus, and was expelled from Athens by Hipparchus for a less acceptable revision of Musæus' oracles, has nothing to say of his version of Homer?

influence of the Pergamum school. In Rhodes, Cicero was a pupil of Posidonius, who was a pupil of Panætius, who again was one of the followers of Crates of Mallos, the founder of the Pergamum school. Thus Cicero's statement about Pisistratus seems to go back ultimately rather to Pergamum than Alexandria, and the circumstances which there gave rise to the story seem to have consisted in the desire to depreciate Alexandria and its royal patrons, by showing that there was nothing so very remarkable in learning receiving royal patronage. Even so long ago as the time of Pisistratus tyrants interested themselves in literature. Be this as it may, the epigram, in whatever spirit composed, betrays its late date by the fact that, whereas Pisistratus was expelled twice, it says he was expelled three times.

Thus the authorities on which Wolf relied for proving that the present shape of the Homeric poems is due to Pisistratus seem to have their source in an epigram, which, whatever the motives for composing it, is certainly untrustworthy. Further, the epigram itself gives no countenance to the inference which Cicero and other later writers have drawn from it, viz., that Pisistratus caused a recension of Homer to be made. The epigram says that before Pisistratus Homer was "sung scatteredly." Now we know on good authority—that of the orators Isocrates, B.C. 436–338, and Lycurgus, B.C. 395–329—that the singing of the rhapsodies at the great Athenian festival was regulated by law; but who introduced the law does not seem to have been known. In Alexandrian times it certainly was a matter of conjecture who introduced the law; and it is a reasonable inference that in the epigram of which we are speaking we have nothing more than the author's conjecture, stated positively, that the law was due to Pisistratus.

For thirty years or more nothing was done to carry out the views which Wolf had expressed in his *Prolegomena;* and yet, as we have pointed out, although Wolf demonstrated the difficulties in the way of the traditional view of Homer, he contributed nothing himself towards pointing out what in the poems was Homer's work and what was not. When at last, after more than thirty years, Hermann took up the question, although he came forward with a criterion by which to distinguish the original parts of the poems from subsequent accretions, he never fully carried out the process of applying his criterion. But more important is it to notice the nature of his criterion, and the change of view which it involves. For the purpose of distinguishing between what is Homer and what is later than Homer in the poems, inconsistencies and discre-

pancies are important. But no solution of this part of the Homeric question can be satisfactory which explains only the inconsistencies. The general consistency of the poems is an equally important factor in the problem, and a satisfactory solution must account for the consistency as well as the inconsistencies. The natural reaction from the Wolfian theory took the direction of insisting on the importance of the second factor, and it is in the explanation of this factor that the importance of Hermann's work lies. According to Wolf, the unity of the poems was, as it were, mechanically superinduced by the Commission of Pisistratus. According to Hermann, if the poems in their present shape possess unity, it is because the original kernel possessed unity. Homer sang of the wrath of Achilles and the return of Odysseus in two poems, short enough to be carried in the memory and transmitted orally, and these poems contained in outline the essential structure of our Iliad and Odyssey. In the process of time later poets inserted various compositions of their own, expanding incidents in the original work, and interpolating, so far as the original permitted, other incidents, and made the expansions and interpolations fit in with more or less neatness. Thus Hermann provided a solution capable of accounting for both the general unity and the particular discrepancies, though he did not or could not work it out so as to recover the original poems. It should also be noticed that on Hermann's theory Homer is not regarded as a rude and primitive bard, but as possessing architectonic genius.

The next attempt to solve the Homeric problem on the lines laid out by Wolf was that of Lachmann. Starting on the assumption that in primitive times only short lays were possible, he first attacked the *Nibelungenlied*, and dissected it into twenty lays. He then in the same way dissected the Iliad into eighteen lays. The principle upon which he proceeds is that primitive poets anxiously avoid the least inconsistency in details; thus, if we find an inconsistency between any two parts of the Iliad, we may conclude that these parts belong to different lays. The lay has no inconsistencies within itself. Thus Lachmann proceeded considerably farther than Wolf; for Wolf allowed Homer some share in the composition of the Iliad and the Odyssey, while Lachmann disintegrated the Iliad into lays which were composed quite independently of each other, and became more or less fortuitously agglomerated together in course of time, and were finally worked into the Iliad as we have it by Onomacritus, acting for Pisistratus.

With regard to Lachmann's theory, it should be noticed that

any support it may have once derived from the dissection of the *Nibelungenlied* is much weakened now, since there is considerable reason to believe that that poem is the work of one author, and not an aggregate of lays. In the next place, analogies drawn from the literatures of other countries have to be used with circumspection. The origin of the *Mahâbhârata* is disputed. The French *chansons* are not epics; and the literary genius of Greece is hardly to be measured by restrictions drawn from the analogy of a Finnish epic—the *Kalewala*. Setting aside these presumptions based on analogies, we have to examine Lachmann's theory in itself. In the first place, we may use the *argumentum ad hominem*. If Lachmann regards an inconsistency as proof of divided authorship, why does he not subdivide those of his lays which contain inconsistencies in themselves? His principle rigorously carried out would necessitate the supposition of a larger number of lays than that which he has resolved the Iliad into. And this is one fundamental weakness of the theory—it lacks any vestige of proof. The same principle applied by another hand would discover a different set of lays, and have as much claim to represent the primitive elements of the Iliad as the eighteen lays Lachmann has produced. In other words, of the two things which require explaining in the Homeric poems—their unity and their inconsistencies—Lachmann overlooks one—the unity—and only offers for the other an explanation wholly incapable of proof, and not even consistently carried out by himself.[1] Thus his theory distinctly falls behind the advance which Hermann had made towards the solution of the problem. Hermann recognised the double aspect of the question, and put forward a theory which at least endeavoured to meet both points. Lachmann sought a one-sided solution, and in framing a hypothesis to account for all the inconsistencies, he lost sight of the other factor in the problem, or imagined that Onomacritus and Pisistratus were capable of accounting for what unity the Iliad possesses.

But we have already seen that there is no historical proof of the existence of the Commission of Pisistratus, and we may now ask whether the supposition of such a Commission is capable of accounting for the unity of the Iliad. In the first place, inasmuch as "diaskeuasts" have been credited with much activity in the shaping of the Homeric poems, it is well

[1] Another serious difficulty in the way of his theory is that of understanding how eighteen different poets, working independently and in ignorance of each other's work, should all happen to choose for their subject some incident relating to the few days of Achilles' absence from the war.

to understand who diaskeuasts were. They were not a class of men united or distinguished by the possession of any special experience or innate powers of working up given material into epic shape. If a playwright touched up or re-wrote a play of his own, already performed, with a view to producing it a second time, he was said to *diaskeuazein* or revise his play. But, more than this, any man who made a correction in a manuscript was a diaskeuast; and if the "correction" was wrong, he was none the less a diaskeuast. So to say that the shaping of the Iliad was the work of diaskeuasts may be true, but it does not help us much, for any man could be a diaskeuast, but not every man could make an Iliad out of given material. On Lachmann's theory, indeed, it would require an artist of consummate skill to give to eighteen wholly independent lays the amount of consistency and unity which the Iliad possesses. Thus the mechanical device of a Commission is inadequate to the purpose. What is required is a poet of no mean rank, and Lachmann gives us, with no satisfactory proof, Onomacritus, who spent his life on Orphic poetry, and would have worked up his material in accordance with his training in Orphic poetry, whereas no Orphic elements are to be traced in our Iliad.

We may further ask what object could Pisistratus have had in amalgamating separate lays into one whole? It could not have been in the interests of literature, for, according to Lachmann, the separate lays are more beautiful than our Iliad. And further, if this was the case, how did Pisistratus contrive to supplant the older, better known, and more beautiful lays by his novel amalgamation? His authority extended only to Athens, but all Greece accepted the Iliad as we have it. If we waive this difficulty, the question still remains what was the object of the amalgamation, since it was not to benefit literature? Pisistratus, we have seen, was apparently believed by some to have regulated the text for purposes of recitation; but the short lays which Lachmann supposes to have existed would be much better adapted for recitation than our Iliad, and to amalgamate these lays into a lengthy whole would not render their recitation the easier.

We next come to the views put forward by the great historian of Greece, Grote. The question which Wolf had suggested, but had not attempted to solve, viz., what is Homer's work, and what is not, in the Iliad and Odyssey, Grote took up and answered. But in other respects he is not a follower of Wolf. The assumption, universally accepted last century, that

primitive poems or lays must be short, Grote did not accept. He quotes from Chodsko's *Popular Poetry of Persia* the fact that "one of the songs of the Calmuck national bards sometimes lasts a whole day;" and refers to the fact, which had been previously used by Lachmann, that the old German poem Parsifal contains 24,810 verses, and was the work of a man, Eschenbach, who could neither read nor write. Thus the composition of the Iliad or the Odyssey before writing was known in Greece has nothing impossible in it. Nor has the oral transmission of the poems; the songs of the Icelandic Skalds were thus transmitted for more than two centuries; and we may add that the Vedas were transmitted in this way for a much longer period. In modern Greece blind singers carry in their memory large quantities of verse which they recite at village feasts. Further, if Homer was, as the oldest traditions relate, blind, writing, even if known in his time, would have been of no use to him. In anticipation of the objection that the power of memory might not be so great among the Greeks as among other nations, Grote refers to the fact that in Socrates' time, as we learn from Xenophon, there were many Athenians who were taught to learn both the Iliad and the Odyssey by heart, and the rhapsodists professionally repeated the poems from memory.

Having thus cleared the ground, and shown that there is no impossibility in composing and transmitting poems of the length of our Iliad and Odyssey by means of memory alone, Grote proceeds to investigate the question of the original unity of these epics on critical grounds, and he begins with the Odyssey. The question at issue is, as he says, whether the gaps and inconsistencies which constitute the proofs "of mere unprepared coalescence" preponderate "over the other proofs of designed adaptation scattered throughout the whole poem?" The conclusion he reaches is, "The poem as it now stands exhibits unequivocally adaptation of parts and continuity of structure, whether by one or several consentient hands. It may, perhaps, be a secondary formation out of a pre-existing Odyssey of smaller dimensions; but if so, the parts of the smaller whole must have been so far recast as to make them suitable members of the larger, and are nowise recognisable by us." Further, "Its authors cannot have been mere compilers of pre-existing materials, such as Pisistratus and his friends; they must have been poets, competent to work such matter as they found into a new and enlarged design of their own."

The Odyssey, then, is itself a proof of the falsity of the assump-

tion that "long continuous epics with an artistical structure are inconsistent with the capacities of a rude and non-writing age," for in the Odyssey "the integration of the whole and the composition of the parts must have been simultaneous." Grote then applies the same critical method to the Iliad. Here he finds that the original scheme of the Iliad, viz., to relate the wrath of Achilles and its consequences—does not comprehend the whole poem. Those books which carry out the original scheme hang together by themselves. Those books (ii. to vii.) which do not relate to the original scheme hang on the whole fairly well together, but present discrepancies with the first set. The portion of the Iliad which has direct relation to the original scheme, as expounded in the opening lines of the First Book, Grote called an Achillêid. The other books "are of a wider and more comprehensive character, and convert the poem from an Achillêis into an Iliad." They give us, not any information about the wrath of Achilles, but a picture of the war against Ilium. They have been worked into a certain conformity with the Achillêis, and "they belong to the same generation and state of society as the primitive Achillêis." Finally, Grote thinks that the Odyssey and Iliad belong to the same age, but are not by the same author; that the Odyssey is probably by a single author, the Iliad probably not.

We may now see how far Grote has laid the difficulties raised by Wolf. The assumption that primitive poems must be short seems to break down under the attack made upon it by Grote and others. As for analogies drawn from other literatures, even were the fact of a ballad origin for epics established, Homer's spiritual and intellèctual superiority over the balladists makes comparison unsafe. But the other difficulty raised by Wolf, viz., as to the possibility of the composition of such poems as our Iliad and Odyssey in times when writing was unknown, is not answered by Grote. Everything Grote says about the possibility of composing and transmitting long poems by means of the memory alone may be admitted, and must always be taken into account in any solution of the Homeric question; but Homer composed, as Grote admits, not for a reading public —there was none—but for recitation before an audience; and although the Athenians in later times would sit for a whole day listening to the performance of tragedies, a day would not suffice for the recitation of the Iliad or the Odyssey. Thus, though the bare possibility of composing the poems without the aid of writing is fully established by Grote, his admission of

the non-existence of a reading public leaves the difficulty raised by Wolf unsolved.

But this failure to shake Wolf's main position, so far from weakening Grote's theory of the Iliad, rather strengthens it. If Wolf was right in denying the possibility of composing long poems in very early times, then Grote's Achillêis is a step in the right direction; and as a solution of the problem how the Iliad as we have it arose, it is superior to Lachmann's lays. Grote's theory does what Lachmann's failed to do—it explains the general consistency of the poem. But unless there is some external necessity compelling us to suppose that originally the Iliad must have been shorter than it now is, Grote's theory is open to the objection which may be alleged against all attempts to extract the original from the present Iliad—it is subjective. The weight assigned to discrepancies or to proofs of design will always depend on the critic: there is no external standard whereby to ascertain their real weight, and consequently no hope of settling the question.

Since Grote, the most important "variety" of the Wolfian theory that has arisen is the view of Professor Paley. With Wolf, but more strongly than Wolf, he insists on the late date of writing, and on the still later date at which a reading public came into existence. But, unlike the Wolfians, he insists on the unity of the Iliad. Thus he reaches the conclusion that the Iliad is posterior to the growth of a reading public, and the latter he correctly dates, on various grounds, as extending from about B.C. 430 on. He does not seem to believe in an original nucleus around which other stories kept collecting, or in a theory of interpolations. The Iliad is not the fortuitous work of time, nor the deliberate work of successive generations, but the design and execution of a single mind working on ancient material. The Iliad, he says, may "be aptly compared to a stained-glass window composed from a quantity of old materials, more or less detached and of different dates, but rearranged and filled in with modern glazier's work, so as to form a harmonious whole, by some cunning artist who had an eye for unity of design, harmony of colour, and a general antique effect." The proofs of this theory are to be found in the non-existence of a reading public before B.C. 430; in the absence, from the Tragedians and from early works of art, of any signs of the influence of Homer; in the general absence of references to Homer[1] in Greek literature before Plato, and in the sudden

[1] References to "Homer" do indeed occur; but Homer was a name used to cover nearly anything written in hexameters. Professor Paley's point is that references to our Homer are not found.



display of acquaintance with Homer in Plato and later authors; and, finally, in the language of Homer, which shows, both in grammar and vocabulary, a thorough mixture of old and new, of genuine and spurious archaisms, which seem to imply that the dialect was not a living or spoken, but a conventional one.

The argument based by Mr. Paley on the evidence of works of art is one for specialists to discuss, and it is enough here to say that it is a question on which specialists disagree. The same may be said of the argument based on the evidence of language. But we may add that the words, formations, grammatical usages, and the omissions of the digamma which Mr. Paley cites to show the late character of our Homer, have been paralleled by Dr. Hayman (in his edition of the Odyssey) in the oldest Greek literature that we possess; while Mr. Monro has pointed out (in his article on Homer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) the leading features which stamp the dialect of Homer as the oldest form of the Greek language that we possess. The fact that Pindar and the Tragedians seem to have preferred to draw on the Cyclic Poets instead of on Homer for subjects, does not compel us to infer that our Homer was unknown to them. There are two good reasons to explain the fact. The first is one pointed out by Aristotle: the plots of the Iliad and Odyssey are so simple that they only admit of being dramatised in one or two ways. The second reason is that Pindar and the Tragedians were too wise to challenge comparison with Homer on his own ground, and were too artistic to endeavour to "paint the lily or gild refined gold." Finally, if Homer is, as Mr. Paley seems to maintain, a compilation, is the work of a jobber of ancient literature, is, in fact, a sham literary antique, there is only one period to which it could be assigned, and that is the post-classical period. In B.C. 420 nothing of the kind could become as popular as Homer undoubtedly was, as is shown by the fact that Antimachus of Colophon did compose an imitation epic, and the Greek public refused to be put off with such patchwork. But our Homer, as Mr. Paley admits, was composed before post-classical times, and we may be sure that in classical Greek literature the only period capable of producing a great epic was the epic period. Antimachus himself certainly did not compile our Homer, as Mr. Paley suggests, for we know from Porphyrius that he plagiarised our Homer.

There remains a difficulty raised by Wolf against the antiquity of Homer which we have left untouched—that of understanding how poems as long as the Iliad and Odyssey could have been recited. A single recitation, it is said, would not

suffice. This is true; and the inference is that the poems were designed to last through several recitations. This simple explanation has long escaped recognition because we are apt to forget that all classical Greek literature was designed for recitation, and that at different times the manner of recitation differed. In the times when an author's audience consisted of the whole body of citizens (in the time, *e.g.*, of the drama or of choral lyric), an audience was only got together at long intervals, and therefore what was put before it had to be finished at a sitting. But in Homeric times the poet's audience consisted of the household of a chieftain such as Odysseus or of a king like Alcinous; and this audience gathered together night after night. There is, therefore, nothing in the conditions under which epic poetry was produced to make the recitation of the Iliad and the Odyssey impossible.

Attempts have frequently been made to show that one part of the Iliad or of the Odyssey is inconsistent with some other part, and therefore could not have been composed by the same author. But, in the first place, it is still more unlikely that an interpolator, whose first business would be to make his interpolation harmonise with the original, would make these mistakes; and next, there are inconsistencies to be found in Milton, Shakspere, Dante, Virgil, and novelists of all kinds, quite as great as in Homer. A logical inconsistency goes for little in these questions; and a poetical inconsistency yet remains to be discovered in Homer. We can only protest against the spirit in which some critics approach the greatest of poets. They examine the Homeric poems as they would a candidate's dissertation for a degree, and have no hesitation in rejecting the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey for not knowing his Homer.

The question whether the Iliad and the Odyssey are both the work of a single hand admits of no positive proof. If it could be demonstrated by internal evidence that they must belong to different ages, the question would be settled. But there is nothing in the poems to show that they do not belong to the same age; and although we cannot say that Greece was incapable of producing two poets possessing the marvellous genius required to produce such a poem as the Iliad or the Odyssey, it seems safer to adhere to the literary tradition, which is not on the whole likely to have been mistaken on such a point of capital importance, and which attributes both the Iliad and the Odyssey to Homer.



APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III.

READING, WRITING, AND PUBLICATION IN CLASSICAL GREEK TIMES.

ALL alphabets and syllabaries, except the Sanskrit alphabet, seem to have had their origin in picture-writing. The idea of communicating information by rough sketches of objects occurs sooner or later to most peoples. The Red Indians by means of sketches on bark can or could send simple messages to each other, as, *e.g*, the number of an advancing enemy. In these messages a man is drawn in much the same way as schoolboys draw men on a slate—a big circle surmounted by a smaller one and resting on two more or less perpendicular strokes. If the figure is represented with a hat, it stands for a white man; if not, for a red man. The signature and address are conveyed by sketches of the creatures which the chiefs have adopted as totems and taken their names from. The picture-writing of the Aztecs, though still sketching, was capable of expressing more ideas and more abstract ideas than that of the Red Indians. This was the result of the continual use of picture-writing for the purposes of governing a large and heterogeneous empire and for recording its history. The next stage in the development is when the sketch comes to be regarded not so much as a picture of the object depicted as the symbol of the name of the object; and by the time the signification of the sketch has become conventionalised, the sketch has generally ceased to have any great resemblance to the natural object, and is itself a conventional symbol. This stage is represented by the 214 "radicals" in Chinese. These characters, which by themselves, and in composition with other marks, form the written symbols of every word in the language, are not letters, nor syllables, but each is a word. The next stage is reached when the character, having long represented merely the sound of the object's name, comes to stand for the sound of the first syllable only. In this stage writing consists of a collection of symbols representing the sound of syllables, that is, a syllabary. This is represented by the cuneiform or arrow-headed inscriptions, which, like the Chinese "radicals," are descendants from sketches. The uniform and generally rectangular appearance of cuneiform inscriptions is a marked instance of the influence exercised by the nature of the writing material on the form of the writing itself. Straight strokes thicker at one end than at the other are the natural result of rapid writing with a pointed instrument on clay. Using such writing materials, the Assyrians followed the line of least resistance. and eliminated curves. Finally, the character which at first stood for the whole word and then for the first syllable came to stand for the first letter, and an alphabet was attained. We have illustrated the development of the alphabet from the writing of various nations, but in Egyptian all these stages co-exist. Some characters stand for a word, some for a syllable, and some for a letter, thus clearly indicating the origin of alphabets.

From the Egyptians the Phœnicians obtained their alphabet, from the Phœnicians the Greeks, from the Greeks the Romans, from them modern European nations. The source from which the various Greek alphabets were derived is indicated partly by tradition, for the Greeks

attributed the alphabet to Cadmus, whose name is Semitic ("Kedem," Eastern), partly by the form of the letters themselves and partly by the names of the letters. When borrowed, the alphabet necessarily underwent some changes, since the Phœnician alphabet contained symbols of sounds not used by the Greeks (*e.g.*, several sibilants), and in Greek there were vowel sounds not known to the Phœnicians. We have, however, to do not with the history of the Greek alphabet, but its date. The names of the Greek letters which end in the "emphatic aleph" (contrast, *e.g.*, *bēta*, the Greek name for B, with the Hebrew *bṯh*), show that the alphabet was borrowed from the northern Semites, those of Tyre and Sidon; and it has been argued that the borrowing must belong to the period of the Phœnicians' naval and commercial supremacy over the Mediterranean. So, too, it has been argued that the borrowing by the Italians from the Greeks must be referred to Græco-Italic times, *i.e.*, the time when the Greeks and Italians yet formed one people. But in these remote ages we get out of our chronological depth, and we have no means of knowing, at any rate at present, what "must" have happened or when. It is better to say that these data are uncertain in themselves and give a general presumption of antiquity to the introduction of the alphabet, which must, however, wait upon better established facts. For these facts we may look either to ancient Greek authors themselves or to inscriptions. For instance, if Homer mentioned writing, and the date of Homer were fixed, we should get a date for writing. As a matter of fact, there is a well-known passage in the Iliad (vi. 169) in which it is said that Proitos sent Bellerophon to Lycia, "and gave him tokens of woe, graving in a golden tablet many deadly things, and bade him show these to Anteia's father, that he might be slain." But, as we have seen, there are more ways of sending a message than by means of an alphabet; so the passage is not conclusive. In the next place, the passage may have been tampered with; and finally, as the date of Homer is vague, it does not help us much to date the alphabet.

The difficulties in the way of utilising Homer to date the alphabet are applicable to all passages from ancient authors. When we go farther back than B.C. 500, the dates assigned to authors become hard to check; and there is always the possibility—which may or may not amount to a probability—that the passage relied on may not be genuine. With inscriptions, however, we are on safer grounds: they do not admit much of interpolation, and we may rely on their being now in the shape—the action of time and weather excepted—in which they came from the sculptor's hands. Forgery is, indeed, possible even on stone, but much less likely than in the case of MSS. But inscriptions get destroyed, and the earlier their age the fewer survive. In the valley of the Nile, indeed, which has the least destructive climate in the world, inscriptions of enormous antiquity do of course survive, but it is not on the banks of the Nile that we can expect to find Greek inscriptions. And yet it is there we find the oldest inscription in Greek that is yet known or can be dated.

On the banks of the Nile in Nubia is the temple of Abu Simbel. In the temple of Abu Simbel are huge statues of stone, and on the legs of the second colossus from the south are chipped the names, witticisms, and records of travellers of all ages, in alphabets known and unknown. The earliest of the Greek travellers who have thus left their names are a body of mercenaries. They seem to have formed part of the expedition which was led as far as Elephantine by King Psammatichos

—whether the first monarch of that name or his successor does not appear.[1] From Elephantine they seem to have set out on a voyage of discovery up the river, and to have gone past Kerkis—the locality of which cannot be fixed—as far as the stream allowed, perhaps to the second cataract. On their return they put in at Abu Simbel, and on the left leg of the colossus inscribed the record of their bold voyage. Besides the common record, we find the names of various members of the detachment inscribed separately by those who wished at once to display their ability to write and to perpetuate to all time their connection with the expedition.

This interesting inscription can be dated by two methods, which check each other, and thus give tolerable certainty to the result. In the first place, the letters used, and their shape, show that the inscription is older than inscriptions, generically similar, which are known to belong to about B.C. 540. For instance, in our inscription there is no special symbol for the long *ō* of the Greek alphabet, the omega. One and the same symbol has to do duty for the long and for the short *o*. Inscriptions of B.C. 540 have acquired a special symbol for the omega. As we have already said, the Greeks, possessing a more extensive vowel system than the Phœnicians, had to modify the alphabet they borrowed; and the late origin of the sign for the omega is betrayed by that letter's position in the Greek alphabet. As for the shape of the letters in the Abu Simbel inscription, the sign for *s*, instead of being made with four strokes, as in the sigma of the B.C. 540 inscriptions and that of the ordinary Greek alphabet (Σ), is made by means of three strokes only, which is known on other grounds to be the older form. Thus the epigraphic evidence makes the inscription to be some time older than B.C. 540. The evidence from the contents of the inscription places the date between B.C. 620–600, according as we take the Psammatichos mentioned to be the first or the second king of that name.[2]

We have, then, got a date for the existence of writing in Greece. In B.C. 600 the art of writing was so

[1] A Rhodian pinax, discovered lately at Naukratis, which probably belongs to the time of Psammatichos II., shows epigraphic peculiarities resembling those of the Abu Simbel inscriptions. See Mr. E. A. Gardner in the *Academy*, No. 700.

[2] This inscription, having a bearing on the Homeric question, has been discredited. As for the epigraphic evidence, it is said that it is inconclusive because against the evidences given above that the inscription belongs to B.C. 600, we have to set the fact that the writing runs from left to right, whereas it was only later than this period that this direction was adopted. In the next place, we have a distinct sign for *ēta*, which is again a later introduction. As for the contents, the fact that in the inscription there appears not only a King Psammatichos, but a mercenary—the commander of the exploring detachment—of the same name, points to the inscription's being a "hoax." But if we confine ourselves to the Ionic alphabet, the only evidence we have whether the sign for *ēta* was current in B.C. 600 is our inscription. We cannot reject it because we have no other of B.C. 600. If we go beyond the Ionic alphabet, we find that in Thera this sign was used about B.C. 600. So too with regard to the direction of the writing: the left to right direction only became general in the fifth century B.C., but exceptions before that period occur. This is one. As for the "hoax" theory, it implies a knowledge of the early history of the Greek alphabet which probably not even a learned Greek possessed, and may be on the whole safely denied to a practical joker.

well established in Greece that in a detachment of mercenaries a certain number could write. There is, however, another point to notice: the names of these soldiers show that they came from different parts of Greece, some being Ionians, others Dorians; but all use the same Ionic alphabet. This means that not only was writing well enough established for Greeks from all parts of Greece to possess the art, but also that since the introduction of writing enough time had elapsed for the Ionic alphabet to spread and to become common amongst the Dorian-speaking peoples in the south-west of Asia Minor. What amount of time we ought to allow for these things to come about, it is impossible to say. Low races at the present day pick up writing very quickly from our colonists; and amongst the quick-witted Greeks it would spread very rapidly. Instead of losing ourselves in conjectures, let us look for evidence.

Since writing had in B.C. 600 been known for some time in Greece, a passage in a Greek author older than B.C. 600 that refers to writing is not, from the mere fact of such reference, suspicious. Now in Archilochus, who is generally supposed roughly to have lived about B.C. 700, there is a reference to writing. Archilochus had a great faculty for saying unpleasant things, and he used fables of his own invention with great effect. With regard to one of these fables he speaks metaphorically of "a grievous *skytalé*." A *skytalé* was a staff on which a strip of leather for writing purposes was rolled slant-wise. A message was then written on the leather: the leather was then unrolled and given to the messenger. Now if the messenger were intercepted, the message could not be deciphered, for only when the leather was rolled on a staff precisely the same size as the proper one would the letters come right. Such a staff, of course, the recipient by arrangement possessed. This primitive method of cipher continued to be used a long time by the Spartans for conveying state messages. To return to Archilochus: the leather from the *skytalé* was without the staff an enigma; the key to the enigma was the *skytalé*. The fable of Archilochus was to outward appearance innocent of any recondite meaning, but was a "grievous *skytalé*" for the person attacked.

It seems reasonable to accept this passage as indicating a knowledge of writing in Greece about B.C. 700. This date allows a century for the diffusion of the art and the spread of the Ionic alphabet which are implied by the Abu Simbel inscription; and the passage does not prove too much. It does not imply even that Archilochus himself could write. The invention or introduction was sufficiently novel and admirable to furnish a poet with a metaphor; and the *skytalé* was probably then, as in later times, a governmental institution. Thus the mention of a *skytalé* accords with the probable supposition that writing was used for governmental purposes before it became common among the people.

But the knowledge that writing was known in Greece in B.C. 700 is not sufficient for our purpose. It may have been a government monopoly, or at any rate, so little known as to be useless for literary purposes. What we want to know is first when a reading public existed. We must, however, realise that such a reading public as exists at the present time was never known in antiquity, for two reasons: first, the population, and consequently the possible number of readers, was much less in the city-states of the ancient world than in the nation-states of modern history: secondly, ancient authors could not reach their public by any means of publication to be compared with the

printing-press. Further, the means of attaining publicity were more restricted in classical Greek times than in Rome. The large number of literary slaves in Rome made the multiplication of manuscripts easy, and cheapened and extended their sale. In Greece, multiplication was less rapid and circulation more restricted. Recognising then the limited extent of the Greek reading public in classical times, we have to see what evidence there is for its existence at all; and we may regard its existence as satisfactorily proved when we find trade in books going on. Now we find a book-market[1] mentioned in Eupolis, that is to say, existing between B.C. 430 and B.C. 405. The trade in books thus indicated may also be illustrated by a passage from Xenophon (who lived about B.C. 444–355), in which he says, that from a ship wrecked at Salmydessus on the Pontus many books[2] were recovered. We may therefore take it as reasonably proved that a trade in books existed at the end of the fifth century B.C. Other indications of a reading public may be found in Aristophanes, who in the *Tagenistae*,[3] speaking of a young man gone wrong, ascribes his ruin to "a book, or Prodicus, or bad company." But we may go a little farther back. In fragments of the old comedy we find as terms of abuse such expressions as "an unlettered man," "a man who does not know his A, B, C."[4] And the extent of education thus implied to exist about B.C. 450 cannot be regarded with suspicion when we find in Herodotus[5] that boys' schools existed in Chios in the time of Histiaeus, say about B.C. 500.

Before, however, inferring the existence of a reading public in B.C. 500, we must look rather more closely at our evidence. Reading and writing were taught B.C. 500, and to be unable to read and write was, half a century later, a thing to be ashamed of. But this does not of itself prove the existence of a reading public. Enough education to be able to keep accounts, to read public notices, to correspond with friends or business agents, may have been in the possession of every free Athenian in the period B.C. 500 to B.C. 450, and the want of such education may have caused a man to be sneered at; but this does not prove the habit of reading literature. There is, however, a passage in the

[1] *οὐ τὰ βιβλί' ὄνια*, Meineke, F. C. ii. 550.

[2] *πολλαὶ βίβλοι γεγραμμέναι*, An. VII. v. 14.

[3] Fr. 3, *ἢ βιβλίον διέφθορεν ἢ Πρόδικος ἢ τῶν ἀδολεσχῶν εἷς γέ τις*. This passage, and the general proofs that reading was common in Aristophanes' time, make it improbable that the passage in the *Frogs*, 1114, *βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιά*, is rightly regarded by Mr. Paley as proving reading to be a novelty in B.C. 405. On the contrary, allowing for comic exaggeration, it shows the habit was extensive. The habit of reading at this time is shown by a striking and important passage in Xenophon, *Mem.* i. 6, 14, *τοὺς θησαυροὺς τῶν πάλαι σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν, οὓς ἐκεῖνοι κατέλιπον ἐν βιβλίοις γράψαντες, ἀνελίττων κοινῇ σὺν τοῖς φίλοις διέρχομαι, καὶ ἄν τι ὁρῶμεν ἀγαθὸν ἐκλεγόμεθα*. It seems from this that not only were Socrates and his friends in the habit of reading together, but that the habit of writing books was sufficiently well fixed for them to ascribe to it considerable antiquity.

Another passage, Plato, *Apol.* 26 D, which has been taken to show that the physical treatises of Anaxagoras were on sale in the theatre (at other times than those of theatrical performances) is uncertain, and has been explained to refer to theatrical programmes.

[4] *Ἀναλφάβητος, ἀγράμματος*.

[5] vi. 27, *παισὶ γράμματα διδασκομένοισι ἐνέπεσε ἡ στέγη*.

lyric fragments of the poet Theognis, who flourished even still earlier, that is, about B.C. 550, which is of much importance in this connection. Theognis says he has hit on a device which will prevent his verses being appropriated by any one else; he will put his name like a seal on them, and so no one will take inferior work for his when the good is to be had, but everybody will say, "These are the verses of Theognis the Megarian." This passage certainly implies that Theognis committed his works to writing; it also implies that the manuscript would be sufficiently public property to make it impossible either for an unscrupulous person to claim to be the author, or for other people's inferior poetry to come to be attributed to Theognis. But does it imply that Theognis published for a reading public? that is, caused copies of his MS. to be multiplied and sold or distributed to his friends? Before answering this question we must ask another. If an author in B.C. 550 did not publish in this way, how did he publish?

There are some kinds of literature which at the present day are brought before the public, but not by means of the printing-press. Sermons, for instance, and plays may attain much publicity, and yet never exist out of manuscript, and never be meant to be printed. This was the case with the drama and the oratory of Athens. Plays and speeches were composed for the theatre and the assembly; the authors—like Shakspere, it seems—had no thought of reaching their public by any other means. But this was the case not only with the dramatists and orators of Greece in classical times, but with writers of all kinds. Lyric authors wrote either choral lyrics which were to be performed in public at some festival, or songs of love and wine which were to be sung over the wine after dinner. In neither case was it an existence on paper which the lyric poet looked to for his work, but oral delivery. Now, returning to Theognis, we may safely say that if he caused copies of his MS. to be multiplied and distributed, it was not in order that they might be read, but in order that his friends might learn them and sing them at drinking-parties or other social gatherings. In other words, the very nature of Theognis' poetry shows that it was not composed for a reading public.

But this leaves untouched the question whether Theognis did have copies of his MS. multiplied and distributed, or whether the "seal," which he prides himself on having invented, was to be applied to his own autograph manuscript only. There is nothing in his words to show that he contemplated the multiplication of copies: is there anything that we know of in the conditions under which he wrote to show whether he was thinking of his autograph copy or of a larger number? We may first investigate what is implied in the multiplication of manuscripts, and then see whether it was possible in B.C. 550 to publish in this manner. The first condition implied in multiplying manuscripts is that the means of writing should be fairly cheap and not cumbrous. For writing letters in ancient times the usual materials were thin wooden tablets, the surface of which was covered with wax [1] and surrounded by a rim such as surrounds a schoolboy's slate. On this wax the writer wrote by means of a pointed instrument. These tablets were called *deltoi*,[2] and the writing instrument was called by the Greeks *graphis* or *grapheion*,[3] by the Romans *stilus*. Two or more of these tablets of the

[1] Or a composition, μάλθα. [2] δέλτοι. [3] γραφίς, γραφεῖον.

same size might be fastened together by means of a string run through holes in the tablets. Now, on a number of these *deltoi* an author might write his work, but to multiply and circulate copies of his productions would be so cumbrous that it is difficult to believe that any one sought or gained publicity by such means. Still it must be remembered that the Assyrians carried on business and formed large libraries out of even more unpromising writing materials—slabs of clay. When we find that the persons wishing to consult a book in an Assyrian library are requested to write the name of the book and its author on a proper piece of clay and hand it in to the librarian, we must obviously get rid of some of our preconceived notions as to the material difficulties in the way of circulating waxed tablets.

But although waxed tablets may have been at one time the best means the Greeks had of committing their thoughts to writing, they were for literary purposes eventually superseded by papyrus, on which the scribe wrote with a reed-pen, *ca'amus*,[1] and ink, *melan*,[2] out of an inkstand, *melanodocheion*.[3] These were materials much more adapted for literary purposes; and if we assume that authors did not begin to circulate copies of their works until papyrus was common in Greece, and if we can date the introduction of papyrus, then we shall have a date before which we may perhaps deny the multiplication and circulation of manuscripts. Now papyrus was known and used for writing purposes in Egypt from times of the greatest antiquity; and it has been assumed that as soon as the Greeks had any commerce with Egypt they would at once adopt this convenient writing material and import it largely. This may have been the case, but, in the absence of evidence to show that it was, we ought not to build on the supposition. We must look for something more trustworthy, and this we find in Herodotus. In a chapter in which he traces the origin and history of the Greek alphabet in a manner shown by recent epigraphical researches to be correct, Herodotus declares that from of old[4] the Ionians had used papyrus for writing purposes. Even if we decline to trust Herodotus' information on this point, we must at any rate admit that papyrus was so much in use in his day that there seemed to him nothing improbable in its having been in use for a long time among the Greeks. That is to say, papyrus was well established in B.C. 450.

But between Herodotus, B.C. 450, and Theognis, B.C. 550, is a century. In B.C. 450 the material conditions admitted of the multiplication and circulation of works. In B.C. 550 they admitted at least of an author's committing his works to writing, but whether at this time an author had to use waxed tablets or could use papyrus, we can hardly say. But this century is precisely the period of the rise of prose literature in Greece, and it may be said that this fact in itself implies that litera-

[1] κάλαμος. [2] τὸ μέλαν. [3] μελανοδοχεῖον.

[4] v. 58, καὶ τὰς βύβλους διφθέρας καλέουσι ἀπὸ τοῦ παλαιοῦ οἱ Ἴωνες, ὅτι κοτὲ ἐν σπάνι βύβλων ἐχρέωντο διφθέρῃσι αἰγέῃσί τε καὶ ὀΐέῃσι. On this passage Mr. Paley says, "The utmost that can be made of the evidence is, that for the few who could write there was not wanting some material to write upon. But the insignificant extent of such literary efforts must be inferred from the absence of any term for either 'pen' or 'ink.'" But if the Greeks did not write on papyrus with pen and ink, with what did they write? and if they had pens and ink, of what value is the fact that in the literature of this period the words for pen and ink do not happen to occur?

ture could be and was circulated. An orator found his publicity in the assembly, a playwright on the stage, a lyric poet in the convivial gatherings of his friends; but for what public except a reading public could a philosopher or a historian compose? Here again we must try to get rid of some of our pre-conceived notions, and endeavour to form our views of Greek literature not by our own habits, but by what we know of Greek life. The greatest of Greek philosophers, Socrates, determined the current of Greek thought and the philosophy of all time, not by addressing himself to a reading public, but by the power of the living word; and herein Socrates exemplifies the Greek mind. So long as the Greek, whether philosopher or orator, lyric or dramatic poet, was brought into living contact with his fellow Greeks, so long the literature of Greece was spontaneous, creative, and classic. When the audience, whether of the assembly, the law court, the theatre, the symposium, or the temple, was replaced by a reading public, then the Greek mind ceased to create, and began to draw its inspiration, not from Nature and the life around it, but from books. It became learned and imitative, pedantic and frigid. If Socrates gave much to the Athenians, he also derived much from his continual attrition with them. His example of personal intercourse between the teacher and the taught was, it need hardly be said, followed by Plato and Aristotle. They composed not primarily for a reading public, but for their own circle. And before their time, as Plato read his *Phædo* to his friends and pupils, so Protagoras read his treatise on the gods in the house of Euripides or in the Lyceum; and Socrates had listened to Zeno reading his works. Herodotus read portions of his in Athens at the festival of the Panathenæa, while at Olympia such readings were specially provided for, and not only Herodotus, but Gorgias, Hippias, and Empedocles there obtained publicity for their compositions.

It seems, then, that the rise of prose literature in the century B.C. 550 to B.C. 450 does not necessitate the assumption of the existence of a reading public, but only of an audience to listen to the author reading his manuscript. So we may sum up the results, so far, of our inquiry into the early history of reading, writing, and publication as follows:—In B.C. 700 writing was known in Greece, as appears from the metaphor used by Archilochus of the "grievous *skytalé*" In B.C. 600 the art was so widely spread, that out of a band of mercenaries from all parts of Greece, a certain portion could carve their names on the colossus at Abu Simbel. In B.C. 550 it was possible for Theognis and for prose writers to commit their works to writing. In B.C. 500 there were schools in Greece. In B.C. 450 it was a disgrace to be unable to read and write. In B.C. 420 we have proof of the existence of a reading public in the fact that there was a book trade.

And now, how does this affect the Homeric question? In this way: The epic age—and we must remember that although the Iliad and Odyssey are the only epics which have come down to us, there were many other epic poems which survived until Alexandrine times at least,—the epic age ended before B.C. 700, and we have no evidence to show or reason to believe that writing was known in Greece much before that date. How long before B.C. 700 Homer lived we do not know. Herodotus conjectures that he lived about B.C. 850, but this is only a conjecture, and as we do not know the grounds for it, we cannot place much faith in it, especially as the existence of such a person as Homer is disputed. At any rate, we have no reason to believe that poets of the epic age could commit

their works to writing, however short or long their poems were, or transmit them except by word of mouth. It seems doubtful indeed whether the means of writing which were in use among the Greeks between B.C. 700 and B.C. 550 were enough to allow of the transmission by writing of any considerable body of literature. But since many epics were somehow transmitted during this period, and since before B.C. 700 they apparently must have been transmitted by word of mouth and memory, their transmission does not seem of itself to prove that writing was used B.C. 700 to B.C. 550 for literary purposes.

But the effort of memory required for the composition and transmission of poems without the aid of writing has not, as we have seen, in itself anything incredible, though it implies a power not frequently manifested among us who live among printed books. If this were the only difficulty in the way of believing that the Iliad and Odyssey were composed before B.C. 700, and transmitted substantially as we have them, the question would be settled. Memory was equal to the task. But the composition of a poem implies a public to whom the poem is to be given, and conditions under which it is brought before that public. We have now to inquire to what public and how the epic poets addressed themselves? To find an answer we must go to the Homeric poems themselves. Whatever the origin and growth of these poems, all inquirers admit that there is embodied in them much that is ancient and much that reflects the life and manners of the time before B.C. 700. We may therefore reasonably seek to find out from them the position of poets in the earliest times. Now we find bards mentioned several times in the Odyssey, and they are always conceived of as attached to a great house or a royal court; and they are always represented as reciting their poems over the conclusion of a meal. Thus, attached to the court of King Alcinous was the minstrel Demodocus, "whom the Muse loved dearly, and she gave him both good and evil; of his sight she reft him, but granted him sweet song." In the house of Odysseus there was Phemius the minstrel; and King Agamemnon left his wife Clytemestra under the care of a minstrel, "whom the son of Atreus straitly charged, as he went to Troy, to have a care of his wife." The audience, therefore, to which the minstrel addressed himself was that to be found in a great house or a royal court. Odysseus says to King Alcinous, "Nay, as for me, I say that there is no more gracious or perfect delight than when a whole people make merry, and the men sit orderly at feast in the halls and listen to the singer, and tables by them are laden with bread and flesh, and a wine-bearer drawing the wine serves it round and pours it into the cups." To his audience the minstrel might sing either lays he had learnt from others or his own poems. Phemius says, "None has taught me but myself, and the god has put into my heart all manner of lays, and methinks I sing to thee as a god."

Such being the audience for which an epic poet composed, and such the conditions under which he produced his work, the question now arises whether—granted a poet capable of composing the Iliad or the Odyssey, and of carrying the poem in his head—there is anything in these conditions to make the delivery of so long a poem impossible? Obviously it would be impossible to finish the recitation in a single evening; and Wolf argued that this proved that the Iliad and Odyssey could not have been originally of anything like their present length. But is it impossible to suppose that the poet took up the thread of his story one evening where he had dropped it the previ-

ous evening? If it is possible for us to put down a book one day and take it up again the next, and not lose the thread of the story, there is no difficulty in imagining the epic poet's audience listening one night to a story commenced on some previous night.[1] The Arabians, at any rate, found nothing impossible in supposing a Caliph listening to tales in this way for a thousand and one nights. The ancient Greek seems to have experienced the same temptation as the modern novel-reader to sit up all night over an interesting work, for when Odysseus breaks off relating his adventures to the Phæacians on the ground that it was time for sleep, Alcinous, who compares him to a minstrel, says, "Behold the night is of great length, unspeakable, and the time for sleep in the hall is not yet; tell me therefore of those wondrous deeds. I could abide even till the bright dawn, so long as thou couldst endure to rehearse me these woes of thine in the hall." And if Odysseus proceeds to finish his tale, it is not because the Phæacians would have refused to listen to its conclusion the following evening, but because he wished to return to Ithaca as soon as he might.

So far then as concerns the audience and the manner of reciting his works, the epic poet might well have composed a poem too long to be finished in a single sitting. And we have seen that poems of great length can be composed and transmitted without the aid of writing. It seems, therefore, that the difficulties raised by Wolf against the composition of the Iliad and the Odyssey in their present form are not sufficiently great to exclude the hypothesis that we have the Homeric poems substantially as they were originally composed. This, however, is only a negative conclusion; when the poems were as a matter of fact composed, and whether since then they have remained substantially unaltered, are questions which have yet to be answered. There remain a couple of subjects to be briefly noticed before this chapter can be completed. First, there is the method of recitation in post-epic times; second, the question by whom were the poems transmitted?

So long as the royal and aristocratic form of society described in the Homeric poems existed, so long the mode of recitation also described in Homer would last. But with changes in the social and political systems of Greece, changes would also come about in the audience and the manner of addressing the audience. The epic age was succeeded by the period of lyric poetry, and the lyric poets fall roughly into the two classes of poets who composed personal lyrics designed for recitation before the circle of their own aristocratic friends, and of poets who composed choral lyrics to be performed at the expense of a tyrant or a government before an audience consisting, not of a narrow circle, but of the whole population of the city. The political conditions that rendered possible the oligarchical society for which personal lyrics were composed differed from those described in Homer. Royalty had disappeared, and the aristocracy were engaged in a struggle with the people for their privileges; but the audiences in an aristocracy were but little different from those in the regal times of Homer. They were more restricted; the royal hospitality of old times had given way to the exclusive narrowness of good society; and the class interests of the audience, being shared by the poet, who was himself a member of

[1] Indeed the Scholiast to Od. iii. 267 says, *ἔν τε ταῖς ἑορταῖς ἔν τε ταῖς ἀναπαύσεσιν ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συλλεγόμενοι τούτων ἤκουον, εἴ που ἐπιφανὲς γέγονεν ἢ καλὸν ἔργον.*

their society, tended to injuriously affect, both directly and by the reaction of audience on author, the character of the lyrics.

But in the main, the conditions under which epics were recited remained the same as in the previous period, though, as the epic age was over, the reciters were no longer authors, or at any rate authors of epics. But when oligarchy was overthrown by either a tyrant or a democracy, the nature of the demand for epic recitation changed, and along with it the character of the supply. Tyrants and democracies alike catered for the amusement, not of a restricted circle, but of the whole free population of a city. This is shown by the character of the literature which succeeded personal lyrics. The very essence of choral lyric is that it was performed in public on the occasion of some public festival, whether of religious worship or of general rejoicing over the honour brought to the city by the triumph of some citizen at one of the national games of Greece. Now, whereas a royal household or a circle of friends might be gathered together night after night, and thus give the epic poet the opportunity of reciting a poem which required several sittings for its recitation in full, the whole population of a city could only be gathered together from time to time, and the occasions were separated by periods too long to admit of a recitation being resumed, when interrupted by the dispersal of the audience for an uncertain period. The result of this change in the conditions was, as we have said, a change in the method of recitation. An epic poem was no longer recited as a whole, but those parts of it which could be detached, and which were tolerably complete in themselves, were recited at public festivals. The portions thus chosen were called "rhapsodies," and those who declaimed them were called "rhapsodists." The word "rhapsodist" simply means "singer of verses."[1]

The inferences just drawn from the nature of the lyric poety of the sixth century B.C. as to the method of reciting epic poetry in that century are confirmed in two ways. In the first place, we know on other evidence that rhapsodies were portions of a length suitable for recitation at public festivals; and in the next, we find it is precisely in the sixth century that rhapsodists first begin to be known. The earliest notice of rhapsodists is the mention of them in Herodotus[2] as existing in Sicyon in the time of the tyrant Cleisthenes (B.C. 600–560). Prizes were offered at festivals by the various cities of Greece to the rhapsodist who declaimed best; and consequently there soon rose a class of professional rhapsodists, who travelled from place to place to declaim epic poetry. The change which thus came over the mode of recitation is easy to understand, and is still testified to by the English meaning of the word "rhapsody." Reading in a room to a limited audience is a much more subdued performance than is declamation in the open air to a large number of people; and we know that the declamation of the rhapsodists was theatrical and sensational, effects being sought after by gesture and inflection of the voice, which were unknown in earlier times, and were condemned by good critics in later periods. The rhapsodists continued to declaim epic poetry until the latest classical times; and at Athens at least their recitation of Homer, who alone of poets was

[1] Pindar, *Nem.* ii. 1, Ὀμηρίδαι ῥαπτῶν ἐπέων ἀοιδοί, sons of Homer singers of stitched verses. Words are metaphorically said to be stitched together into verses, and the word ῥαψ-ῳδός is derived from ῥάπτω, to stitch, and ἀοιδός, a singer.

[2] V. 67

allowed to be recited at the Panathenæa, was regulated by law, probably in the fifth century B.C. The rhapsodists contending at the festival, if left to choose their own selections, would probably all have chosen much the same pieces—those they knew the audience liked best. The law therefore determined that the competitors should follow the order of the poem, and that one rhapsodist should take up the recitation where the last one left off. Thus the audience, instead of hearing the same piece over and over again, heard a considerable part, if not the whole of the poem.

It remains for us now, having seen the way in which epic poetry was recited in post-epic times, to briefly consider the way in which it was transmitted. During most, if not all of the period of the rhapsodists, writing was probably sufficiently developed in Greece for epic poetry to be safely transmitted on tablets or papyrus; so that we need not trust to the memory of the rhapsodists for the transmission of epics. But there remains the time before the rhapsodists, before B.C. 600; and to account for the transmission of Homer, the Homeridæ, sons of Homer, have been much used. They have also been used to account for the expansion of the "original" Iliad and Odyssey to their present length; and they have further been used to account for Homer himself. It has been supposed, that is to say, that the Homeridæ were a guild of epic poets, working on common artistic methods and common literary principles, who jointly produced epics which they ascribed to the mythical founder of their guild, Homer. We may compare them, in their descent from a mythical eponymous founder, to the hereditary heralds at Sparta, who claimed to be descended from the hero Talthybius. In their common literary methods we might compare them to the "school" of Æschylus, which consisted of dramatists descended from the great tragedian, but that it is incorrect to say—though it is said—that the "school" of Æschylus worked on principles common to themselves and their ancestor.

With regard to the Homeridæ, we have first to say, that though they may account for the transmission of Homer, they leave unsolved the problem how the other epic poets managed to transmit their works. In the next place, we must know who and what the Homeridæ were, for the word is used in different senses apparently by ancient writers. By Pindar it is used as equivalent to rhapsodists, and by Plato as meaning students of Homer. Strabo (14, 645) says the Homeridæ were people who lived in Chios, and were so called because they were relatives of Homer. Now if this were all the evidence there were to go upon, it would be insufficient; for here we have no mention of a guild, nothing to show that the soi-disant descendants of Homer wrote poetry of any kind, nothing but the fact that there were people living in Chios who claimed kinship with the great poet, and that students of Homer were called Homeridæ. What then is there to supply these missing links? The statement of a scholiast. According to the scholion on the passage of Pindar above referred to (*Nem.* ii. 1), the descendants of Homer inherited and sang his poems. These Homeridæ were subsequently called rhapsodists, and introduced many verses into the poems.[1] What is the worth of a scholiast? A scholiast was any person who wrote scholia or notes on the margin of a manuscript of an ancient

[1] Ὁμηρίδας ἔλεγον τὸ μὲν ἀρχαῖον τοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὁμήρου γένους, οἳ καὶ τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ ἐκ διαδοχῆς ᾖδον, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ οἱ ῥαψῳδοὶ οὐκέτι τὸ γένος εἰς Ὅμηρον ἀνάγοντες.

author, and some scholia are as late as A.D. 1400 or A.D. 1500. Being of various dates and of very various value, scholiasts are now only regarded as trustworthy so far as they can be supposed to be quoting from good authorities; their own conjectures are not to be relied on. Now in the scholion we are concerned with, there is no indication that the scholiast had before him any other authorities than those we possess; and there is every indication that he took the very easy chance which was given him of making a conjecture of his own. So far as negative evidence has any value, it is against this conjecture. The scholia to the Iliad, which are valuable simply because they contain many quotations from Aristarchus, the famous editor of Homer, and from other Alexandrine critics, never mention the Homeridæ; and when they mention that a verse was suspected or rejected in antiquity, they never attribute the spurious verse to the authorship of a rhapsode or a Homerides.

Not only is the evidence for a literary guild of Homeridæ weak, and not only is the assumption of such a guild inadequate to explain the transmission of the body of epic poetry which was by other authors than the real or supposed Homer; it does not even account for the transmission of the Homeric poems. If they were the hereditary property of a guild resident in Chios, and if it is only by means of such a literary organisation that we can explain the transmission of Homer in the absence of writing, then the Homeric poems should only have been known in Chios. Their spread throughout Greece remains a greater mystery than ever. But it may be said a considerable body of epics —whether Homeric or non-Homeric —was transmitted somehow, and if not by some such literary organisation, then in what way? To this we may reply, that the diffusion of epic poetry, while it negatives the supposition of local guilds, also indicates a free and spontaneous cultivation of epic poetry, not a mechanical system of oral teaching designed to secure the perpetuation of literature. From the way in which Phemius prides himself in the Odyssey on composing original poems, it may be inferred that other minstrels recited more poems by other composers than works of their own; and this is confirmed by the scenes in Alcinous' palace where Demodocus is called on for lays already known to his audience. We may conjecture, then, that in epic times a poet, before beginning to compose original works, associated by a natural tendency with other poets, and stored his mind with the epic poetry which was in part their work and partly learnt by them from older poets. This may explain the transmission of epic poetry. It will also explain its diffusion; for a minstrel who travelled from place to place would doubtless gladly learn and gladly teach other minstrels whom he met. Even when the epic age was over and lyric poetry took the place of epic, the mode of transmission and diffusion seems, until the rhapsodists arose, to have been much the same. Poets, though they no longer wrote epics, declaimed epic poetry and sought much of their inspiration from it. The influence of epic poetry over the lyric poet Stesichorus, for instance, was unduly strong; while Terpander, Clonas, Polymnestus, and other early lyric poets are mentioned[1] as declaiming epic. In fine, the natural and obvious cultivation of poetry by free communication and personal contact between poets in times when writing was not used for literary purposes suffices to explain the transmission and diffusion of epic.

[1] Plutarch *de Mus.* 3.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EPIC CYCLE.

THERE were other epic poets in early times besides Homer. Their works, though they have not reached us, were preserved until the time of the Alexandrian grammarians, and probably for some centuries later. Some of these writers took for their subject incidents from the history of the expedition against Thebes; others incidents from the Trojan war. At some time or other the poems dealing with the Trojan war were arranged in the order of the events they narrated; the same thing was done with those which related the Theban war, and the two sets of poems together formed an epic cycle, so called apparently because it embraced the whole round of the mythological events related in epic poetry. Then in later times, when readers did not care to wade through all these poems, and yet wished to possess an acquaintance with the mythological events related in them, a prose summary of their contents was drawn up. This prose "epic cycle" began at the beginning of all things, with the wedding of Heaven and Earth, from whom were born the Cyclops, and related the origin, course, and consequences of the Theban and Trojan wars, finishing with the death of Odysseus, unwittingly killed by his son Telegonus. This prose summary was the work of Proclus, but whether of the neo-Platonic philosopher of that name, who lived in Constantinople about A.D. 450, or of the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, is somewhat uncertain. It seems, however, more probable that the latter should be the author than that a neo-Platonic philosopher should have condensed the epic poets into a manual of mythology; and accordingly Eutychius Proclus of Sicca is generally regarded as the author.

As it is from the summary of Proclus that we derive our chief knowledge of the poems contained in the Trojan cycle, we will give a brief account of the contents of Proclus' work, as it has come down to us. The principal fragment of his summary was found prefixed to some of the manuscripts of Homer. It begins with the epic called the *Cypria*. Why the poem was called the *Cypria* we cannot now tell. It may have been because the rape of Helen, which is the main subject of the poem, was the work of the Cyprian goddess Aphrodite, or because the author of the poem was born at Cyprus. But who was the author is also uncertain: some ascribed the poem to Homer,



but Aristotle expressly denies the Homeric authorship of the work; according to others, Stasinus or Hegesias was the author. This is a point which cannot be settled: let us turn to the contents of the poem. Once on a time Zeus took counsel with Thetis how the earth, overcrowded with men, might be relieved of her burden, and he resolved that there should be a great war, the Trojan war. Therefore Thetis was married to Peleus, and from them was born the hero of the Iliad, Achilles. At the marriage-feast the goddess of strife, Eris, appeared, and by the golden apple which she gave to be awarded to the fairest, brought the three goddesses Athene, Here, and Aphrodite to contend about their beauty. They appointed Paris (or Alexander) to decide between them, and, won over by the promise of the fairest of wives, he awarded the apple to Aphrodite. She then bade Æneas set sail with Paris from Troy for Greece; and, in spite of the prophecies of Helenus and Cassandra, they departed. In Sparta they were entertained by Menelaus, the husband of Helen, the fairest woman in Greece. During the absence of Menelaus Paris carried off Helen. A storm first drove them to Sidon, which Paris captured, and thence they went to Troy. At this point in the poem an episode seems to have been introduced concerning the adventures of Helen's brothers, Castor and Polydeuces, relating the death of the former and the alternate immortality conferred on them by Zeus. After this, Iris, the messenger of the gods, announced to Menelaus the flight of Helen, and Menelaus along with Agamemnon took steps to gather an army together to recover her by force of arms. First Menelaus went to Nestor, who made a long speech about Epopeus and the daughter of Lycus, about Œdipus and the madness of Heracles, and about Theseus and Ariadne. Then they gathered together the chieftains of Greece, except Odysseus, who, foreseeing the duration of the war, feigned to be mad, but was found out by the device of Palamedes, on whose suggestion the infant Telemachus was placed in the furrow where Odysseus was ploughing. The expedition then, after prophecies from Calchas, set sail, and came to Teuthrania, which they sacked.[1] There Telephus killed Thersander, the son of Polyneices, and was himself wounded by Achilles. When the Greeks proceeded on their voyage they were caught by a storm. Achilles was carried to Scyrus, where he wedded Deïdameia; and on his return to Argos he healed

[1] In mistake for Troy, according to Proclus. This seems extraordinary, but Strabo says the same thing; and it is consistent with what is soon after said, viz., that after this mistake the Greeks got Telephus to show them the way to Troy.

Telephus in order that he might guide the Greeks to Troy. The expedition, scattered by the storm, again assembled at Aulis; but while there, Agamemnon killed one of the deer sacred to Artemis, and the goddess in vengeance detained the fleet by contrary winds. When Calchas informed the Greeks that the anger of the goddess could only be appeased by the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon, she was brought to Aulis on the pretext that she was to be wedded to Achilles, and then was offered as a victim. But Artemis substituted a deer, and carried off Iphigenia to Tauri, making her immortal. Then the Greeks, obtaining fair weather, set sail. They touched at Tenedos, where Philoctetes was bitten by a hydra, and in consequence of the offensive nature of the wound the Greeks abandoned him on the isle of Lemnos. On their arrival at the land of Troy, Achilles quarrelled with Agamemnon on a point of precedence, and the Trojans at first repelled the Greeks, Hector slaying Protesilaus. But Achilles joined the fray and the Trojans were defeated. The Greeks then opened negotiations with the Trojans, demanding back Helen and the wealth she had carried off. The Trojans rejected the demands, and the Greeks proceeded to ravage the country. At this time Achilles was desirous of seeing Helen, and Thetis and Aphrodite brought them together. The siege did not advance, and the mass of the army longed to return home, but Achilles prevented them. They then continued devastating and plundering, and amongst the spoils Briseis fell to the lot of Achilles, Chryseis to Agamemnon. There then follows the death of Palamedes, the resolve of Zeus to assist the Trojans by withdrawing Achilles from the fighting, and a catalogue of the Trojan allies.

The *Cypria* was followed by the Iliad of Homer, and the next poem in the cycle was the *Æthiopis*, which took up the story where the Iliad left it. The *Æthiopis* was by Arctinus of Miletus, the greatest of the epic poets after Homer. His date is made by the chronologists to be about 776 B.C. After the death and burial of Hector, the Amazon Penthesilea, the daughter of Ares, came to assist the Trojans, and was killed by Achilles. The Trojans, by the good offices of Achilles, were allowed to bury the heroine, and this gave Thersites occasion to speak evil of Achilles and Penthesilea. Enraged at this, Achilles slew Thersites with a blow from his fist, and hence arose dissension in the Greek army. In the end, Achilles sailed to Lesbos, and there having sacrificed to Apollo, Artemis, and Leto, he was purified from the guilt of blood by Odysseus.

After this, Memnon, son of Eos, the dawn, clad in armour made by Hephæstus, came to the assistance of the Trojans. Thetis foretold to Achilles the doom which awaited him if he killed Memnon; but when Antilochus, the friend of Achilles, had been slain by Memnon, Achilles in vengeance killed Memnon, who was conveyed away by his mother, Eos, and made immortal by Zeus. Achilles routed the Trojans and chased them into the city, where he fell by the hands of Paris and Apollo. A fierce fight arose over the body of the Greek hero, which was at last carried back to the ships by Odysseus, whilst Ajax kept off the foe. Then Antilochus was buried, and lamentation was made over Achilles by Thetis and her nymphs. When the body was placed on the pyre, Thetis conveyed it away to the isle Leuce; the Greeks erected a mound and held funeral games in honour of Achilles; and at these games, in which the divine armour of Achilles was one of the prizes, Odysseus and Ajax contended for the armour, which was awarded to Odysseus.

The next poem is the *Little Iliad*. It is generally associated with the name of Lesches, who was said to belong to Lesbos. But Aristotle prefers to speak of the author of the *Little Iliad* without pretending to know his name, and it is therefore probable that he thought there was no authority for assigning the poem to Lesches. This is confirmed by the fact that Hellanicus of Lesbos, who on patriotic grounds would probably have credited his fellow-countryman with the authorship if there had been any excuse for doing so, attributes the work to Cinæthon of Sparta. Further, it has been conjectured that Lesches is not a proper name, but is derived from the word *leschê*, a market, and meant merely the man who sang in the market to the assembled people.

The *Little Iliad* says that the award of Achilles' divine armour to Odysseus was due to Athene. Ajax, in his anger at the slight put upon him by the preference shown to Odysseus, resolved to slaughter the Greek chieftains; but Athene sent madness on him, so that he slew sheep for men, and when he awoke to a sense of this further disgrace, he killed himself. After this Odysseus contrived to capture Helenus, by means of whose prophetic powers the Greeks learned how Troy might be captured. They sent Odysseus and Diomedes to Lemnos, to bring to them the wounded Philoctetes. He was healed by Machaon, and then killed Paris in single combat. The body of Paris was treated with contumely by Menelaus, but was given to the Trojans for burial. Helen, Paris being dead,

became the wife of his brother, Deïphobus. At this point in the poem yet new characters are brought on the scene. Odysseus fetched Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, from Scyrus, and gave to him his father's divine armour. For the Trojans, a fresh hero appeared in Eurypylus, the son of Telephus. Neoptolemus and Eurypylus fight as their fathers had (in the *Cypria*) fought before them, and Eurypylus is slain. Meanwhile Epeus, inspired by Athene, contrives the famous wooden horse. Odysseus, having mutilated and disguised himself, steals into Troy to gather information, and though recognised by Helen, returns in safety. After this, in company with Diomede, he succeeded in entering Troy and carrying off the Palladium, or image of Pallas, which as long as it was in the possession of the Trojans secured Troy from overthrow. Then picked men of the Greeks were shut up in a wooden horse; the rest of the army burnt their tents and sailed away, as though they had raised the siege. But they only went as far away as Tenedos. The Trojans in their joy at the end of the war pulled down part of their wall to admit the horse into the city, and feasted and rejoiced because they had defeated the Greeks.

Proclus says that the *Little Iliad* was followed by the *Sack of Troy*, the work of Arctinus of Miletus. According to Arctinus, the Trojans at first were doubtful about the horse. Some proposed to throw it over a precipice, others to burn it, others to place it as an offering to Athene in the temple of the goddess. The last view prevailed, and the Trojans made merry. Laocöon, who had urged the destruction of the horse, was killed by two serpents that came out of the sea; and Æneas, who had supported Laocöon in his opposition to the reception of the horse into the city, withdrew with his followers to Ida. Sinon, a Greek, who had gained entrance into Troy by a stratagem, then gave the signal to the Greek fleet by a torch. The Greeks returned, and Troy was simultaneously attacked from without by the main body, and from within by those who had gained admittance by means of the horse. Neoptolemus slew Priam at the altar of Zeus; Menelaus killed Deïphobus and carried off Helen to the ships. Cassandra, daughter of Priam, fled to the temple of Athene, and, still clinging to the image of the goddess, was dragged away by Ajax Oileus. Dismayed at this reckless impiety, his fellow-soldiers would have stoned Ajax to death, but that he fled for protection to the altar of the very goddess he had offended; and therefore, when the Greeks sailed away, Athene devised destruction for them on the sea. Astyanax, the little son



of Hector and Andromache, was killed by the advice, if not the hand, of Odysseus; and Andromache became the prize of Neoptolemus. Then the city was burnt, and Polyxena slaughtered on the tomb of Achilles as an offering to the hero's ghost.

The *Sack of Troy* was followed by the *Nostoi*, or "The Return," or, as it was sometimes called, "The Return of the Atridæ."[1] Proclus calls the author Agias; Pausanias, Hegias. Eustathius says he was a Colophonian. It seems probable that there were several poems called the *Return*. The one summarised by Proclus takes up the story where the *Sack of Troy* left it. The wrath of Athene, roused by the impiety of Ajax Oileus, and extending to all the Greeks because they failed to punish Ajax, now begins to manifest itself. First, she caused the two sons of Atreus to quarrel about setting sail: Agamemnon stayed to appease Athene, but Menelaus set sail, following the example of Diomede and Nestor, who reached their homes in safety. Menelaus, however, lost all his ships but five, and then was driven to Egypt. Calchas the seer, Leontes, and Polypoetes, went on foot to Colophon,[2] and there buried Teiresias. When Agamemnon was about to sail, the ghost of Achilles appeared and warned him, but in vain, of his doom. There next follows the storm in which Ajax perished. Neoptolemus, by the advice of Thetis, returns by land, meeting Odysseus in Maroneia; and eventually, after burying his father's old friend, the aged knight Phœnix, returns to his grandfather, Peleus. The poem concludes with the murder of Agamemnon by Ægisthus and Clytemestra; the vengeance taken by Orestes and Pylades, and the return of Menelaus home.

Finally, the tale of Troy was wound up by the *Telegonia*, or story of Telegonus. This epic was by Eugamon of Cyrene, who lived about B.C. 570. The *Telegonia* attached itself to the Odyssey closely, taking up the story where the Odyssey ended, viz, with the death of the suitors. The suitors were buried by their relatives, and Odysseus went to Elis to see the herds there. He was entertained by Polyxenus, from whom he received a bowl on which was chased the story of Trophonius, Agamedes, and Augeas. He then returned to Ithaca and accomplished the sacrifices ordained by Teiresias. After this he went to Thesprotis and married Callidice, queen of the land, and led the Thesprotians in a war against the Brygi. The god

[1] ἡ τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν κάθοδος.

[2] This mention of Colophon confirms slightly Eustathius' statement that the author was a Colophonian.

of war, however, routed Odysseus' army, but then was fought by Athene, until Apollo intervened. After the death of Callidice, Polypoetes, the son of Odysseus, inherited the kingdom, and Odysseus returned to Ithaca. Meanwhile Telegonus, the son of Odysseus by Circe, had sailed from Ææa in quest of his father, and had come to Ithaca. He was ravaging the island when Odysseus came to the assistance of the Ithacans and was killed by Telegonus. Then Telegonus having discovered who it was he had slain, took the body of Odysseus, with Telemachus and Penelope, to his mother Circe. She made them immortal. Telegonus married Penelope, Telemachus Circe.

It may be asked what grounds there are for ascribing a considerable antiquity to the *Æthiopis*, *Cypria*, the *Sack*, the *Return*, &c.? In the first place, there is the unanimous belief of antiquity that the earliest period of Greek literature was an age of epic poetry, and that these epics belonged to that period. In the next place, there are the perpetual allusions throughout lyric and dramatic poetry to the tales of Troy and Thebes which were told in these epics. Further, in the way of definite external evidence there is the mention by Herodotus of the *Cypria* as distinct from the work of Homer and as inconsistent in some of its details with the Iliad. The *Epigoni* also, one of the poems relating to Thebes which was incorporated in the cycle, is mentioned by Herodotus (iv. 32). In Theognis, who flourished about B.C. 540, there is a quotation from the *Cypria*.[1] Finally, Callinus, whose date is placed about B.C. 730, mentions the *Thebais*, another of the poems incorporated in the cycle which dealt with Thebes, though he ascribes it to Homer.

As we have said, the Epic Cycle included not only a series of epics relating the story of the Trojan war, but also another series relating the expedition against Thebes. Of the latter we have no summary and practically no knowledge. We may gain some idea of the contents of the Theban epics from tragedies on the same subject, but we can form no idea of the way in which the tale of Thebes was treated by the authors of the epic poems, nor of their literary merit. The most famous of the Theban epics was the *Thebais*. Its author is unknown. It treated of the history of Œdipus and his sons, as did also, to judge from the name, the *Œdipodeia*, which is ascribed to Cinæthon. The *Epigoni* was presumably a continuation of the

[1] Theogn. 883 (1053), τοῦ πίνων ἀπὸ μὲν χαλεπὰς σκεδάσεις μελεδῶνας, from the lines in the *Cypria* (quoted by Athenæus, ii. 35c)—

Οἶνόν τοι, Μενέλαε, θεοὶ ποίησαν ἄριστον
Θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀποσκεδάσαι μελεδῶνας.



story of the *Thebais*, and may have been identical with the *Alcmæonis*, though this is uncertain. The *Taking of Œchalia* related the story of the capture of the town by Heracles, who thus won Iole—a story on which Sophocles' play the *Trachiniæ* was based. The name of the author is Creophylus. The *Minyas* may have been identical with the *Phocæis*: it contained a descent to Hades, in which Charon appears; and the name of the author is given sometimes as Prodicus, sometimes as Thestorides. The two last-mentioned epics, the *Taking of Œchalia* and the *Minyas*, were not based on Theban myths, and consequently it may be doubted whether they were incorporated into the Epic Cycle. The same may be said of the *Titanomachia*, which was ascribed to Arctinus and also to Eumelus, and of the *Atthis* or *Amazonia*.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IV.

THE RELATION OF THE EPIC CYCLE TO HOMER.

ALTHOUGH Proclus may have given us a correct version of the tale of Troy as it was to be found in the Epic Cycle, it does not follow that we get from his summary a complete or a correct notion of the poems in their original separate form. His object was to give a clear account of the various events which made up the story, and for this purpose he may have had to omit or to alter parts of some of the poems. If two poems narrated the same event, he would, for clearness, have to omit one account; and if one poem did not join on naturally to that which preceded or that which followed it, he would have to alter its beginning or end in order to make the sequence easy and intelligible. We must therefore endeavour to see if, and how much, this has been the case. Beginning with the *Cypria*, we find apparently a clear case of alteration. According to Proclus, Paris, when carrying Helen away to Troy, was driven by a storm, which Here sent, to Sidon and captured the place. But Herodotus[1] distinctly says that, according to the *Cypria*, Paris reached Troy in three days, having enjoyed a favourable wind and a smooth sea. It is unlikely that Herodotus should make a mistake on this point, because he relies on his quotation to prove that the *Cypria* was not the work of Homer. He says, according to Homer, Paris went to Sidon, but according to the *Cypria*, he did not. We have, then, here a case in which the version of the *Cypria* with which we are acquainted through Proclus has been altered in order to make the general flow of the story harmonious, and particularly to make the *Cypria* harmonise with Homer. It may also seem as though Proclus must have omitted a good deal at the end of the *Cypria*; for it is not quite clear how the poem was wound up satisfactorily, so as to make a complete whole in itself; and

[1] ii. 117.

further, it seems that, according to a scholiast,[1] the poem mentioned at least one incident, the death of Polyxena, in the sack of Troy. But this does not prove that the action of the poem included the taking of Troy. The *Cypria* is essentially the narrative of the beginning of the war, and a reference to an incident at the end of the war no more proves that the taking of Troy was a part of the subject of the poem than the references in the Iliad to the death of Achilles prove that his death came within the action of the Iliad.[2] We may therefore reasonably conclude that the *Cypria* ended where Proclus makes it end.[3]

The *Cypria* was followed in the cycle by the Iliad, and after the Iliad came the *Æthiopis* of Arctinus. As far as can be judged, the beginning of the *Æthiopis* seems to have originally fitted on to the end of the Iliad so well that no alteration or omission was necessary. But when we look to the rest of the poem, the case is different. In the first place, according to Proclus, the *Æthiopis* ends with a quarrel between Ajax and Odysseus about the armour of Achilles, the issue of which is contained in the *Little Iliad*. But the *Æthiopis* could not have ended in the middle of the quarrel; it too, as well as the *Little Iliad*, must have related the issue. Even there, however, it could not have stopped. The suicide of Ajax was not an event of sufficient importance, did not exercise so great an influence on the course of the war that an epic could find a natural close, or the story of the war find a breathing place therein. If the *Æthiopis* did not, however, end with the suicide of Ajax, where did it end? The answer seems to be given by the fact that Arctinus did actually carry on the tale of Troy as far as the taking of Troy. This he related in the poem which Proclus summarises and calls the *Sack of Troy*. Doubtless Proclus was right in calling what he summarised the Sack of Troy; but it was not a separate poem: it was part of the *Æthiopis*, and this part got its name from its contents, in the same way as different parts of Homer have received their names from their contents. It seems, therefore, probable that the beginning of the *Æthiopis* was placed next after the Iliad because it immediately took up the story of the Iliad. Then the *Little Iliad* was appended to this portion of the *Æthiopis* because it contained a fuller account of the events which led up to the making of the wooden horse than the corresponding portion of the *Æthiopis* presented. Then the rest of the *Æthiopis*, relating the taking of Troy and called the *Sack of Troy*, was brought in to wind up the tale.

If the *Æthiopis* has suffered by being thus divided into two parts, the *Little Iliad* has also suffered by being sandwiched between the two parts. The *Little Iliad* could not have begun by relating the issue

[1] On Eur. *Hec.* 41, *ὑπὸ Νεοπτολέμου φασὶν αὐτὴν* (*i.e.* Polyxena) *σφαγιασθῆναι Εὐριπίδης καὶ Ἴβυκος· ὁ δὲ τὰ Κυπριακὰ ποιήσας φησὶν ὑπὸ Ὀδυσσέως καὶ Διομήδους ἐν τῇ τῆς πόλεως ἁλώσει τραυματισθεῖσαν ἀπολέσθαι.*

[2] If it be said that Achilles is the principal figure in the Iliad, and therefore an allusion to his death was natural, but Polyxena is not the principal figure of the *Cypria*, we may meet this by pointing to the reference in the Iliad to the death of Astyanax (Il. xxiv. 735), which also occurred in the sack of Troy, and is of no more importance to the Iliad than the death of Polyxena to the *Cypria*.

[3] And as he makes it end, *i.e.*, with a prophecy from Zeus, in which the poet could insert so much of the rest of the tale of Troy as was necessary to wind up the loose ends of his own story.

of the quarrel between Odysseus and Ajax; it must have related the cause of the quarrel, and probably the poem covered much the same ground as the beginning of the *Æthiopis*. So, too, the *Little Iliad* would not merely relate the making of the wooden horse; it would also go on to tell how it was used and with what result, *i.e.*, tell the taking of Troy. This is proved by the fact that Pausanias and other authors refer to incidents of the sack as occurring in the *Little Iliad;* while Aristotle says that from it tragedians drew the plays called the *Sack of Troy, Setting Sail, Sinon*, and *Troades*.

Finally, the *Return* and the *Telegonia* seem to have fitted naturally into their places in the cycle, and to have needed and received no alterations.

The question now arises whether the alterations, or rather the omissions, just described are to be regarded as the work of Proclus, or whether the independent poems, when they came to be arranged so as to form a cycle, were altered so as to fit on to each other and make a continuous story? The latter seems to have been the case. Proclus says expressly that the poems of the cycle were much read, precisely because they, or rather it, made a continuous story. Now, some of the poems in their original form repeated a great deal of the story told in others, as we have seen; and if they were embodied in the cycle just as they stood, without any dovetailing or excisions, they would not make a continuous story. Further, Proclus' statement is confirmed from other sources. The last line of the Iliad was altered so as to make it join on to the *Æthiopis*.[1] The version of the Odyssey as it was embodied in the cycle was called the "Cyclic Odyssey." The "Trojan Table" which was found at Bovillæ, and may have formed part of the decoration of a library, contains pictures and legends which confirm Proclus in the order he places the poems composing the cycle in.

When the poems were arranged so as to form an Epic Cycle is uncertain. The "Trojan Table," which seems to presuppose the existence of the cycle, probably belongs to the early part of the reign of Tiberius. The "Cyclic Odyssey" carries the cycle back to the time of Didymus, who lived in the reign of Augustus, and from whom comes the information about the alteration of the final verse of the Iliad and the "Cyclic Odyssey." But further back than this it is as yet impossible to trace the arrangement of the poems into a cycle. We know indeed that Zenodotus arranged in order the poems of Homer; but this seems to refer rather to the cataloguing of the Homeric poems for the library at Alexandria than to the editing of the cycle.

We now have to ask what is the relation of these poems to Homer? There are many incidents which they have in common, and which one may have borrowed from the other. The murder of Agamemnon is told in the Odyssey and also in the *Return*. There are throughout Homer numerous references and brief allusions to events which are related in full in the cyclics; and we may suppose either that the cyclics worked out in detail hints given in Homer, or we may say that Homer had the works of the cyclics before him, and was referring to them. Indeed, when we find in the Odyssey that a minstrel

[1] Schol. Vict. Il. xxiv. 804, *τινὲς γραφουσιν· ὣς οἳγ' ἀμφίεπον τάφον Ἕκτορος· ἦλθε δ' Ἀμαζὼν Ἄρηος θυγάτηρ μεγαλήτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο.*
The Iliad ends really—
ὣς οἳγ' ἀμφίεπον τάφον Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο.

is asked to sing the lay of the horse, we seem to have a reference to the *Little Iliad* or the *Æthiopis*. But there are not only references between the cyclics and Homer; there are cross references. If, for instance, the Iliad presupposes the *Sack of Troy*, the *Sack* also presupposes the Iliad, which would prove that each poem was later than and borrowed from the other. It seems, therefore, that we must seek some other explanation. This may perhaps be found in supposing that the references, say in the Iliad to the fate of Astyanax, are not to the *Sack*, but to the floating popular legend. So, too, it would not be necessary to assume that the *Return* expanded the brief allusion to Agamemnon's death contained in the Odyssey. Both authors may have drawn independently from the stories of the people. In fine, the cyclics need not have borrowed from Homer, nor Homer from the cyclics; both may have borrowed from a common source.

This indeed assumes that there was a common source for Homer and the cyclics to draw upon, and it has been denied that we have any proof of the existence of a popular legend telling the tale of Troy. But this denial seems to be made on insufficient grounds and to be opposed to facts. In the first place, all peoples have their folk-lore, floating mythology, and popular legends. In the next place, the comparison of Greek mythology and legends with those of other Aryan peoples shows that the Greeks had folk-tales long before the epic period. Again, each city and place in Greece had abundant local myths and legends. Further, we have already seen that many of the tales incorporated in the Odyssey, so far from being the invention of Homer, are not even the special creation of Greece, but are found among peoples of totally distinct origin. Finally, we have in Homer distinct references to lays, *e.g.*, of the horse and the sack of Troy, as existing before Homer's time; while the introduction to the Odyssey says, "Of these things, goddess, declare them even unto us," which implies—if the line is genuine—that the goddess inspired other poets before Homer.

But although we may be fairly certain that there existed in popular story a common source from which Homer and the cyclics may have drawn without one borrowing from the other, it is very improbable that Homer and the authors of the cyclic poems composed their works simultaneously and independently. It is also very improbable that the authors of the later poems—whichever were the later poems—were unacquainted with, and therefore uninfluenced by, the work of their predecessors. Further, if we assume that all the poets were ignorant of each other's work, we cannot understand how it came about, for instance, that the *Cypria* just ended where the Iliad began, and that the *Æthiopis* just began where the Iliad ended. A common source may explain the points which the poets have in common, but it does not explain their avoiding each other's subjects. Of course, it may be said that our knowledge of the cyclics comes from Proclus' summary of the cycle; that in the cycle the poems were cut down so as to fit on to each other; and that therefore we have no right to say that the *Return*, for instance, in its original form did end where the Odyssey begins, or the *Telegonia* begin where the Odyssey ended. To this we reply, that we can only form our opinion on this point by means of the evidence we possess. The summary of the *Cypria* makes it tolerably evident that the poem in its original form did end where the summary makes it end; just as the summary of the *Æthiopis* makes it probable that the original poem began where the summary begins (*i.e.*, at the end of the Iliad), but did not end where the summary ends. So,

too, the *Return* and the *Telegonia* as summarised are evidently poems complete in themselves, and there is nothing in the summary of them which points to their having been mutilated in order to fit on to the Odyssey in the cycle.

We have then these facts to account for: whereas the action of one cyclic poem, *e.g.*, the *Æthiopis*, occupies the same ground as is taken up by that of another, *e.g.*, the *Little Iliad*, the action of the Iliad and Odyssey does not clash with or overlap that of any cyclic poem. We may say that this is accidental; that the authors of the four poems which touch the Iliad and Odyssey knew nothing of Homer, nor he anything of them, and that they all happened to just avoid each other's ground. But this is too improbable to be readily accepted. It is much more likely that either Homer found the Cyclics or they found Homer in possession of certain ground and intentionally avoided poaching on the preserve. We have therefore to draw one of two conclusions; either Homer found the Cyclics in existence, and forbore to go over their ground again, for fear of challenging a comparison with them unfavourable to himself—a modesty which has received its reward in the respect shown to Homer by every generation of civilised men since his time; or the cyclics found Homer in possession of certain ground, and seeing that they could not improve on Homer, contented themselves with occupying the space that he had left—a decision the wisdom of which is seen in the fact that it allowed their work to live by the side of Homer for many centuries, while its soundness is shown by the universal verdict in favour of the superiority of Homer.[1]

Further, it is necessary to observe that there is the same sharp line between the subjects of Homer and Pindar, of Homer and the Tragedians, as there is between Homer and the Cyclics. Now, either Pindar and the Tragedians knew Homer or they did not. Both views have been held; let us see what each view implies. According to the view that Pindar and the tragedians had no acquaintance with Homer, this was because Homer was a late compilation from the floating popular legend which recounted the tale of Troy. This compilation was made about B.C. 420, for the satisfaction of the reading public, which then was coming into existence for the first time. But according to this view, not only were the Iliad and the Odyssey compilations from the unwritten tale of Troy, but the *Cypria*, *Æthiopis*, *Little Iliad*, the *Sack*, the *Return*, and the other cyclic poems also were compilations from the same source, and were made about the same time as the Iliad and Odyssey. The same arguments which show that the Iliad and Odyssey as we have them must have been later than B.C. 430, and could not have been the work of an author living before B.C. 700, also show that the *Cypria*, *Æthiopis*, &c., could not have taken separate and distinct form before B.C. 420, and could not have been the work of authors living in the earliest times. "All these, I am confident," says Mr. Paley, "were written epitomes of different parts of a story, which

[1] Of course it might be said that Homer found the Cyclics in possession of the field and chose ground not occupied by them, because it was best fitted for his purpose, not because he feared comparison. But against this we have to set the improbability of the Cyclics having just left room for the Iliad between the *Cypria* and the *Æthiopis*, and for the Odyssey between the *Return* and the *Telegonia*. We should also have to assume that Homer undertook the function of writing an introduction to the *Telegonia*, of all poems!

in the time of oral recitation formed *one general and undistinguished whole.*" Thus, according to Mr. Paley, Homer and the Cyclics are both later than Pindar and the Tragedians, and Homer is later than the Cyclics. Therefore, in order to explain why the part of the tale of Troy which is found in Homer is not touched on by Pindar, the Tragedians, or the Cyclics, we must either believe that Pindar and the Tragedians, having exactly the same unwritten tale of Troy to draw upon as Homer, by some extraordinary chance managed to avoid precisely the incidents afterwards selected by the compiler of our Homer; or else we must believe that the unfortunate compiler came on to the field after Pindar, the Tragedians, and the compilers of the cyclic poems had used up all the incidents in the legend of Troy which they thought fit for their purpose. Then we must further believe that the incidents which lyric poets, dramatists, and epic compilers — indeed all the poets Greece possessed—had one after another deliberately rejected as unfit for any kind of poetic treatment whatever—these incidents, as soon as they were strung together by some obscure compiler, whose very name is lost beyond conjecture, at once obtained a success and a reputation which wholly eclipsed every other epic compilation, at once took rank above the poetry of the greatest poets, was at once honoured with the name of Homer, and, finally, in spite of its modern allusions, its late and bastard dialect, and its obvious patchwork character, was unanimously declared by Greek critics of all kinds to possess the very highest antiquity and to be a model of epic unity.[1] There have been instances of literary forgery in ancient and recent times, but surely none deserves to rank by the side of our Homer, which thus deceived the very elect of nations, a people whose taste was trained in the finest literature a country ever possessed, whose linguistic sensitiveness is unparalleled, whether viewed from the side of philology or of literature, whose collective powers of criticism were a pruning-knife, that allowed none but the pure works of genius to flourish.

Fortunately we are not compelled to accept such an improbable theory as results from assuming that Homer was later than the Tragedians. We have the alternative of assuming that Homer preceded Pindar and the Tragedians. But on this assumption we have to explain why Pindar and the Tragedians avoided the ground chosen by Homer, and the same explanation should also explain why the cyclic poets avoided Homer's ground. In the first place, we have the reason given by Aristotle; the subjects of the Iliad and Odyssey are so simple that they do not afford material for more than one or two plays. The subject of the Odyssey is the return of Odysseus; of the Iliad, the wrath of Achilles. Each subject is indivisible; it would be practically impossible to construct a play which should have, say, the first half of the story in the Iliad for its plot,

[1] Mr. Paley at least will not allege that the fame of our Homer is due to the way in which his compiler strung together these incidents, which were rejected by all other poets. Antimachus, or whoever it was, was merely a compiler, not an author. ("I never said or spoke of late *authorship*."—*Post Epic Words*, p. 27, n. 1.) The merit of the poems, according to Mr. Paley, is that they contain pieces of beautiful ancient work set together, in which, as belonging to the "one and undistinguished whole," formed by the tale of Troy in the time of oral recitation, must have been known to the Tragedians (though not known in their present connection), and yet were rejected by them.

and be complete. In the next place, to tell the story of Odysseus' return or Achilles' wrath over again in the same way as Homer told it, would be to challenge Homer, the greatest of poets, on his own ground; and it is a proof of the sound judgment of Greek authors that none we know imagined he could gild Homer's refined gold,[1] or tell Homer's tale better than Homer told it.[2] But it may be said that even if the plot of the Iliad or the Odyssey does not admit of much dramatisation, there are many episodes which can be detached from the plot, and would suffice to make a drama. This is true; and it is just in dramatising these episodes that the Tragedians show they were acquainted with both what is told in our Homer, and with the way in which it is told by our Homer. The death of Agamemnon is no part of the plot of the Odyssey, though it is alluded to in the poem. The death of Agamemnon, therefore, was made the catastrophe of the *Return* and the subject of tragedies. Homer's allusions to the matter are slight enough to allow of other authors developing the hint, and filling up the sketch in their own fashion; and we find that the author of the *Return* and Æschylus have each developed Homer's outline after their own fashion, and in a way which shows that Æschylus did not follow the non-Homeric version more closely than he follows Homer. The author of the *Return* made the death of Agamemnon to be the consequence of the wrath of Athene. The Greeks, by not punishing Ajax for his offence against the goddess, incurred her wrath; and Agamemnon, as the leader and representative of the Greeks, paid in his own person for his followers' fault. Æschylus also gives a theological colouring, as it were, to the cause of Agamemnon's doom; but instead of attributing it ultimately to the offence of Ajax, he uses it to confirm his theory that the mystery of undeserved suffering is to be explained by guilt in the sufferer's ancestors. In the same way, every incident in the tale of Troy which does not come within the action of the Iliad and Odyssey, but belongs to the causes or consequences of the action, has been worked by other authors into epic or dramatic form. Further, although neither any epic or any tragic poet ventured to challenge comparison with Homer on his own ground, the like respect was paid neither by epic poets to each other, nor by the Tragedians to epic poets.

But not only do the epic and tragic poets, both by the incidents in the tale of Troy which they accept and those they reject, show an evident acquaintance with our Homer, and distinguish between the plot and the episodes of each of the Homeric poems: there are parallelisms between the Cyclics and Homer which seem to be cases of imitation. For instance, in the *Telegonia*, Telegonus, the son of Odysseus and Circe, sets forth on an expedition to obtain tidings of his father; in the Odyssey, Telemachus, the son of Odysseus and Penelope, does the same. Now it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that one author borrowed the idea from the other; and if this is a case of plagiarism, we have to remember that, in order to prove Homer to be later than the Cyclics, we must say that he plagiarised, and plagiarised from an author who

[1] Somebody did dramatise Homer's own subjects, for Aristotle says so. But the very names of both author and tragedy have perished—the punishment of presumption.

[2] "To attempt to tell the story [of Falstaff's life] in better words than Shakespeare, would occur to no one but Miss Braddon, who has epitomised Sir Walter, &c."—*Obiter Dicta*, p. 228.

brought his poem to a fitting close by making Telegonus marry Penelope, and Telemachus marry Circe. Again, in the *Cypria*, Achilles and Agamemnon quarrel. Achilles withdraws from the fighting, and the Trojans gain successes until Achilles comes forth from his tent. In the *Cypria* this is but an episode, while in the Iliad a similar quarrel (which has a different origin) constitutes the subject of the whole poem. In the *Æthiopis*, again, Antilochus, the friend of Achilles, is slain by Memnon. Achilles, in spite of the prophetic warning of his mother Thetis, takes vengeance on Memnon, kills him, and then is killed himself. In the Iliad it is Patroclus who is slain by Hector, and it is the vengeance on Hector which Thetis warns Achilles will be followed by his own death. Another parallelism from the *Æthiopis* is to be found in the funeral games with which the body of Achilles, as in the Iliad the body of Patroclus, is honoured. From the *Little Iliad* we may take the way in which Menelaus insults the body of Paris before it is returned for burial to the Trojans, as parallel to the treatment of Hector's body by Achilles in the Iliad. In the *Return* there was a descent to the nether world, which at once suggests that of Odysseus in the Iliad. Further, we may notice that the characteristics of certain actors in the tale are repeated in a way not likely to have occurred independently to two authors. In the *Cypria*, Nestor, when consulted by Menelaus about the recovery of Helen, at once makes a long speech full of ancient instances, exactly parallel to his speech in the embassy to Achilles in the Iliad. Again, in the *Æthiopis*, Thersites is as obnoxious as in the Iliad, talking ribaldry about Achilles and the Amazon Penthesilea.

In all these cases, if Homer is more ancient than the Cyclics, as sound judgment declares, and as is agreed upon by the immense majority of writers on the subject, the Cyclics have imitated incidents in Homer, changing either the names of the actors or the occasion of the scene. But if, as most people will allow, this is so, we may derive from the cyclics valuable information as to the contents of Homer in their time. For instance, the expedition of Telegonus in quest of news of his father shows that in the Odyssey, which the author of the *Telegonia* possessed, the expedition of Telemachus was an integral portion. That is to say, since we have no reason to doubt the date assigned by the chronologists to Eugamon, the author of the *Telegonia*, viz., B.C. 560 or B.C. 570, then what is called the *Telemachia* of our Odyssey was part of the poem at the beginning of the sixth century. So, too, the scene in the nether world in the *Return* shows that the *Nekuia* of the Odyssey belonged to the poem when Agias—if he was the author—lived. His date we do not know: we can only say that the literary superiority of the *Return* to the *Telegonia* makes it probable that it belongs to an earlier period. Further, if the *Return* is but an expansion of the sketch given in the early books of the Odyssey of the adventures of Menelaus, Agamemnon, and Nestor on their return from Troy, we carry back the *Telemachia* to before the time of the *Return*.

The information we derive from the Cyclics as to the form and contents of the Iliad is even more valuable. The last two books of the Iliad have been frequently condemned as late additions; but at any rate, they were probably an integral part of the Iliad before the time of the *Little Iliad* or the *Æthiopis*, for the funeral games of Achilles in the latter, and the contumelious treatment of Paris' body in the former, are imitated from what is related in Iliad xxiii. and xxiv. Now Lesches, the author of

the *Little Iliad*, is dated B.C. 700; Arctinus, the author of the *Æthiopis*, B.C. 770; and although we have no means of judging on what grounds Eusebius and Hieronymus[1] dated these early authors, we have no grounds for disputing their dates. Again, the behaviour of Thersites in the *Æthiopis*, and the garrulousness of Nestor in the *Cypria*, are reproductions of scenes which occur in Iliad ii. and ix., *i.e.* in books which, according to Mr. Grote, were not part of the original Iliad. These books then appear to have been part of the Iliad at least before B.C. 770.[2]

CHAPTER V.

THE HOMERIC HYMNS.

THE Homeric hymns are a collection of upwards of thirty poems written in hexameter verse. They vary in length from three lines to six hundred, the majority being short. They belong to widely different ages, and consequently to very various authors. The motives with which they were composed were different, though the majority appear to have had the same object. The authorship is in all cases extremely doubtful, and their literary merit varies considerably. They are called Homeric because they were supposed to be the work of Homer or of Homeric poets; and some are hymns in the original rather than in the later sense of the word. That is to say, they are songs, not necessarily addressed to or telling of the gods, and, when a god is their subject, they are not necessarily of a devotional character. The Greek word *hymnos* was used by Homer of the lays of minstrels, such as the lay of the wooden horse, or of the taking of Troy, or of the loves of Aphrodite and Ares. Any song which related the glorious deeds of men or gods was originally a "hymn." Later, the word in Greek came to have a special sense, and to mean a prayer in verse; in which sense the word rightly describes some of the Homeric hymns.

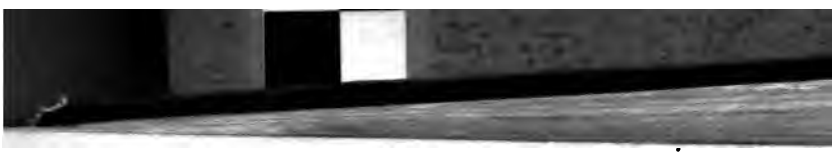
The majority of the hymns are short, and the short hymns are prayers and invocations. Let us, therefore, see what is

[1] Eusebius was Bishop of Cæsarea about A.D. 320. His chronology, which is of great value to the historians of ancient times, and has received many confirmations from modern discoveries, was contained in his Παντοδαπὴ Ἱστορία (from the beginning of the world to A.D. 325). We have only fragments of this work, translated into Latin, and continued by Hieronymus.

[2] This, of course, does not affect Mr. Grote's theory, which regards the later books as added on to the Iliad immediately after the time of Homer, which, according to Herodotus, was about B.C. 850.

prayed for, or why the gods are invoked, and then we may be able to see why these poems, though of different ages and origin, have been collected together. When the collection was made may be discussed subsequently. In some cases the prayer seems to be merely a general one for blessing and happiness. For instance, the hymn to Athene (xi.) contains four lines addressed to the goddess describing her attributes, and concludes "Hail, goddess! and grant us fortune and happiness." So, too, in the hymn to Heracles (xv.), the poet says, in effect, I will sing of Heracles, son of Zeus and Alcmene, who did and suffered many wondrous things, and now has a place in Olympus by the side of Hebe: "Hail, king! son of Zeus; grant us prosperity and to deserve it." But in other prayers we find a much more definite petition. In the hymn to Hestia, the goddess of the hearth (xxiv.), the poet prays to her, wherever she be, to visit this house and give grace to his song. What song she is to give grace to we see at once from the hymn to Selene (xxxii.), the moon, which ends, "Hail, goddess! having begun with you, I will sing the praise of demi-gods, whose deeds minstrels make famous." The demi-gods are the heroes of the story of Troy or of Thebes, and the praise which the bard, after his invocation of Selene, is about to sing is a lay of his own composition or a portion of some epic. This is the character of the collection of the Homeric hymns as a whole. They are prayers or invocations to some god, made by a minstrel or a rhapsodist about to recite an epic poem.

Many of the hymns end like the hymn to the Dioscuri (xxxiii): "Hail, Tyndaridæ! riders of fleet horses, and I will make mention of you in another song." Why the poet should make mention of them, or whatever god he prays to, in another song appears from the end of the hymn to the Earth (xxx.): "Hail, mother of the gods! spouse of the starry Sky! graciously grant me a goodly livelihood in return for my song, while I will make mention of you in another song." If the god hears the prayer, the worshipper will continue his worship; and he prays for a goodly livelihood because, whether a wandering bard or a rhapsodist, it is by the poetic art he makes his living. Other hymns, like one to Hermes (xviii.), end, "Hail, son of Zeus and Maia! having begun with you, I will go on to another song." These too are evidently preludes to the recitation of epic poetry, the epic poem recited being the other song which the bard will go on to. We are therefore justified in concluding that hymns such as the one to Zeus (xxiii.), ending, "Be gracious, son of Kronos, most glorious and greatest," although



they contain no reference to the recitation which the minstrel is about to make, and for the success of which he prays, were, like the rest, preludes to a recitation. But two exceptions must be made. The hymn to Poseidon (xxii.) expressly prays that the god will help those at sea, and the hymn to Ares (viii.) expressly prays for peace.[1] By what accident these two hymns came to be incorporated in a collection of preludes it is impossible now to say.

Having established the nature of the hymns, let us now see what is known about the practice of preluding a recitation of epic poetry by a short invocation. There is in Homer a passage which, describing the bard Demodocus as beginning the lay of the horse, is generally translated, "He being stirred by the god, began;" but it is probable that it should be translated, "He being stirred, began with the god," *i.e.*, began with a brief invocation, such as we have in the hymns.[2] In this case the custom goes back to Homeric times, though it is doubtful whether any of the hymns go back to so early a date. There is no reason to doubt that bards, when about to recite poems of their own composition, made a brief invocation; and a short hymn to Aphrodite (x.), which prays her to "grant a delightsome song," seems in those words to be rather the prayer of a poet about to recite a poem of his own than of a rhapsodist.[3] In this case, Hymn x., which has much beauty in its brief compass, would belong to the epic age, *i.e.*, to the time

[1] Probably we ought to include among the exceptions a hymn to Dionysus (xxvi.), which ends—

δὸς δ' ἡμᾶς χαίροντας ἐς ὥρας αὖτις ἱκέσθαι,
ἐκ δ' αὐσ' ὡράων εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς.

[2] Od. viii. 499, ὁ δ' ὁρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο.
The translation given above is somewhat confirmed by a general resemblance between the formula of the hymns and the passage in the Odyssey. The latter runs—

μυθήσομαι ἀνθρώποισιν
ὡς ἄρα τοι πρόφρων θεὸς ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδήν.
ὣς φάθ', ὁ δ' ὁρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο.

A recollection of the passage seems to have coloured the diction of the hymn to Helios (xxxi.), which ends—

χαῖρε ἄναξ, πρόφρων δὲ βίον θυμήρε' ὄπαζε.
ἐκ σέο δ' ἀρξάμενος, κλήσω μερόπων γένος ἀνδρῶν.

(The construction without ἐκ is more frequent in the Hymns; *e.g.*, ix. 9—

σεῦ δ' ἐγὼ ἀρξάμενος μεταβήσομαι ἄλλον ἐς ὕμνον).

[3] So too xxv., which says (6), ἐμὴν τιμήσατ' ἀοιδήν; and vi. 19—

δὸς δ' ἐν ἀγῶνι
νίκην τῷδε φέρεσθαι, ἐμὴν δ' ἔντυνον ἀοιδήν.

when epic poetry was still being composed. Hymns xxx. and xxxi., which pray for a goodly livelihood, seem more appropriate in the mouth of a wandering minstrel, whose living depended on the success of what he sung, than to a rhapsodist who won prizes. Hymns xxiv. and xxix., which are addressed to the goddess of the hearth, indicate the nature of the audience before whom the minstrel was about to recite. It was an audience like that which listened to Phemius or Demodocus in the Odyssey.

But rhapsodists also invoked the gods to favour them when competing for the prize of recitation. This is clearly shown by a hymn to Aphrodite (vi.) which ends, "Grant me to win the victory in this contest." Further, there is a passage of great interest for our purpose in Thucydides (iii. 104), in which he quotes from one of the Homeric hymns (that to Apollo, i.) He ascribes the hymn to Homer, and he quotes it because it refers to the Ionian festivals held in Delos, and therefore carries back the festival to the time of Homer. More important even than this is it that he calls the hymn a "proem," that is, a prelude, and thus provides external proof for the conclusion pointed to by the hymns themselves, viz., that they introduced a recitation of epic poetry. Whether at the festivals in Delos original poetry alone was recited, or the competition was between rhapsodists reciting the works of others, there is nothing to prove. But the lyric poet Terpander composed proems to prelude recitations of Homer and other epic poetry; and the rhapsodists doubtless adopted the practice. Indeed, most of the hymns may be regarded as the invocations used by rhapsodists at musical contests, though we need not go the length of assuming that the Homeric hymns were a collection of proems made for the use of rhapsodists competing at musical festivals.

Pindar (*Nem.* ii. 1–4) also says that rhapsodists preluded their recitations with an invocation; but he says that they generally invoked Zeus. At first this seems to present a difficulty, for only one of the Homeric hymns is addressed to Zeus. But the plausible suggestion has been made that the choice of a god to be invoked depended frequently on the place in which the recitation was held. For instance, a minstrel about to recite his poem in a chieftain's hall might very naturally invoke the goddess of the hearth, Hestia; as indeed is done in two of the hymns. A rhapsodist competing in the festivals at Delos would appropriately invoke the god of the festival and the island, Apollo. In the same way it is probable that the names of the gods to whom the various Homeric hymns are addressed

indicate the locality or the festival at which the recitations they preluded took place. Thus the hymn to Demeter was probably used at Eleusinia. The hymn to Artemis (ix.), in which Apollo is mentioned, was probably in use at the festival held in honour of the two deities at Claros near Colophon. The hymn to Aphrodite (x.), in which Salamis, in Cyprus, is mentioned, would be connected with the festival of the goddess in Salamis. Invocations to Zeus being equally appropriate under all circumstances, would naturally be frequent. Thus the words of Pindar confirm the conclusion that most of the hymns were the work of or used by rhapsodists.

As yet we have made no special reference to the first four Homeric hymns. Three of them are as long as the average book in Homer, and the other one is over 290 lines. A difficulty therefore has been felt in believing that these long hymns could have been meant as preludes to a recitation, since they are long enough for a recitation in themselves. Various ways out of the difficulty have been imagined. The expansion theory, which plays so large a part in the reconstruction of the "original" Homer, has been applied to the Homeric hymns. It is said that these long hymns were originally short, but were gradually interpolated and expanded to their present length. But why rhapsodists should defeat their own object and stultify themselves in this manner it is difficult to see. If in their present form they are too long to serve the purpose for which they were intended, it is vain to say they have reached it by expansion. If rhapsodists would not compose preludes (or epics) too long for their purpose, neither would they expand them to such a length. A more reasonable theory is that the interpolations are much later than the time of rhapsodists; that they are the work of stupid scribes, or perhaps of editors. The text is indeed in a very bad state, and there are many obscurities, due in all probability to stupid interpolations. Indeed, the first hymn to Apollo is really two distinct hymns run together. But, on the other hand, many obscurities are due to equally stupid omissions. Incomplete as the text is, it would be much more incomplete had not Matthæi in 1772 discovered a manuscript in a stable at Moscow containing a fragment of a hymn to Dionysus and a long hymn to Demeter, hitherto wanting in the MSS. of the Homeric hymns. It is not improbable, therefore, that, with a complete text, we should find the interpolations in our text balanced by the lacunæ.

Another theory is, that as each rhapsodist preluded his own recitation by a short invocation, so the whole contest was opened

by a long hymn, which served as a prelude to the whole proceedings. But this is a pure conjecture, supported by nothing in the hymns themselves, nor by any analogy outside of them. There remains yet another conjecture to be mentioned; it is that the long hymns are not preludes at all, but lays with which the authors actually competed for the prize; that, in fact, we have in them specimens of the lays of which, on the accretion theory of Homer, the Homeric poems are a fortuitous aggregation. This conjecture seems refuted by the fact that the long hymns, like the short ones, end with the declaration that the poet having begun with the god, will now go on to his recitation. But the general stupidity of the MSS. makes it possible that these verses have got tagged on to poems to which they do not belong. A more fatal objection is that the hymn to Apollo which Thucydides ascribes to Homer, and which seems to have been a prelude, not an independent poem, contains 178 lines. Having exhausted the various conjectures made on the subject, and having found none of them satisfactory, we must expand our notions of what rhapsodists could recite and Greek audiences listen to. If 178 lines were not too much as a prelude to the real business of recitation, possibly neither were five hundred.

Although the different hymns belong to different dates, that to the Delian Apollo being the oldest, they probably most of them belong, if not to the epic period, to a time not very long after it. The question how old this collection is is different. The very faulty condition of the text, with other considerations, makes it probable that the collection was made after Alexandrine times. The oldest reference to be found to it is in Philodemos, who was contemporary with Cicero. The difference between the lines from the hymn to Apollo, as quoted by Thucydides and as they stand in our text, is considerable, and shows that the hymn had been transmitted orally—and with the consequent variations—for some time before it was committed to writing. At the same time, the spelling shows that probably it was committed to writing before the completion of the alphabet in the archonship of Euclides; whereas the other hymns were probably not written down until after that period.[1]

[1] *E.g.*, when the hymn to Apollo was meta-characterised, ΈΤΒΟΝ was incorrectly transliterated into *εὔβων* instead of *εὔβουν*. The absence of such mistakes of transliteration in the other hymns makes it probable that they were not transliterated, but written down for the first time after the completion of the alphabet. In xii. 3 the reading *σάω* may mislead. It looks like a false transliteration of ΣΑΟ = *σάου*. But the MSS. read *σάου*. *Σάω* is a correction (!) by Barnes. Editors should restore *σάου*.



Here we may appropriately mention some other poems which, as well as the hymns, were accounted Homeric in ancient times. The most famous is the *Margites*. This poem, which unfortunately has not survived to our time, took its name from the hero. Margites was the very personification of folly. As we learn from a fragment, he knew many things, and knew them all equally badly. Being unable to count more than five, he set to work to enumerate the waves of the sea. From this we can infer to a certain extent the nature of the poem. In the first place, it was not a parody; in the next, it was not a personal attack upon any one. It was general in its character, and depended for its success in provoking mirth on the humour with which the author described the situations into which Margites was naturally brought by his folly. Aristotle regarded it as standing in the same relation to comedy as the Iliad and Odyssey to tragedy; and he regarded the *Margites*, as well as the Iliad and Odyssey, as the work of Homer. Its popularity was great in antiquity. The Stoic Zeno is said by Dion Chrysostom (53, 4) to have written a treatise on it. But it can be traced back safely farther than the time of Zeno, for Archilochus, whose date is about B.C. 700, was acquainted with it. Whether, however, the *Margites* was the work of Homer, it is difficult to say. The absence of any mention of it in the better scholia on Homer has been regarded as an indication that the Alexandrian critics did not rank it as Homeric. Further, Suidas [1] and Proclus attribute it to Pigres, the brother of Artemisia, the queen of Halicarnassus, who distinguished herself in the Persian wars. But this seems to have been merely a conjecture based on the inadequate ground that Pigres interpolated the Iliad with pentameters, and the *Margites* contained iambics mixed with hexameters. Further, the poem can be traced farther back than Pigres, as far as Archilochus. The mixture of iambics with hexameters does indeed seem to show that the *Margites* belongs to a time when iambic poetry was struggling into being, and the epic age passing away. This would make the poem to be post-Homeric; but against it we have to set the fact that Aristotle regarded Homer as the author.

Other humorous poems attributed to Homer, and now lost, were the *Cercopes*, the *Epicichlides*, and the *Caminos*. The

[1] Suidas probably lived about A.D. 1000. He wrote a lexicon, compiled from a variety of sources, previous dictionaries, scholia, and the writings of grammarians. He did not possess much power of discriminating between good and bad authority for a statement; and it is unsafe to rely on what he says, unless it is probable, for some reason or other, that he is quoting from a good authority.

Cercopes, like the *Margites*, seems to have been the literary version of a popular tale; and the tale, at least, was of some antiquity, since it afforded a subject for one of the metopes of Selinus. Besides these poems which have not survived, there is another humorous poem which has survived, the *Batrachomyomachia*, or *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*. This is not based on any popular tale; it is a parody of warlike epics, and presupposes some literary cultivation for its appreciation. It possesses, however, no literary merit, and only occasional flashes of humour, *e.g.*, the reappearance of a combatant after having been severely wounded or even killed—a just parody on the disregard of Homeric heroes for wounds which should have put them *hors de combat*. The *Batrachomyomachia* cannot be the work of Homer, and the only ground for allowing it any antiquity is the statement of Suidas that it was written by Pigres. But as he also attributes the *Margites* to the same author, it is probable he has confused the two poems. It may, indeed, be reasonably doubted whether the *Batrachomyomachia* belongs to the classical period at all. Be this as it may, the parody was successful enough to lead to imitations, such as the *Psaromachia*, *Arachnomachia*, and *Geranomachia*. Parodies were in much favour in Athens during the Peloponnesian war, and were regularly recited at festivals, probably at the Panathenæa. The most distinguished author of this kind was Hegemon of Thasos, a friend of Alcibiades, who composed a *Gigantomachia*, which may have contained, at least, references to the Sicilian expedition. In the next century Eubœus of Paros, and after him Bœotus of Syracuse and Matron, seem to have cultivated parody with success.

Finally, a few Homeric epigrams have survived to our day. They are of various worth, and probably of different dates. Whether any go back to Homer's time, there is nothing to show. They include epitaphs and gnomes in hexameters, and, most interesting of all, the *Eiresione*. This poem gets its name from the olive or laurel twig wound round with threads of wool, which was not only carried by supplicants, but was also carried by boys in the country who went round begging from house to house, and singing the *Eiresione*, much in the same way as boys in our own country at Christmas-time.



CHAPTER VI.

HESIOD AND HESIODIC POETRY.

From Homer to Hesiod the step is a great one. To say that their only resemblance is that they are both in Greek and both in hexameters, would be an exaggeration, though not a great exaggeration. In subject, object, method, style, in the circumstances under which they were produced, and the place and race to which they belong, they differ widely. When Alexander the Great said that Homer was reading for kings, Hesiod for peasants, he gave utterance to a criticism which has considerable truth in it. The contempt for Hesiod implied in the judgment is perhaps too strong, though in reading him we cannot but frequently feel that we are in the tracts of hexameters rather than in the realms of poetry. This is sometimes ascribed to the nature of the subject. But the *Georgics* of Virgil suffice to show that it is possible for a poet to impart at least as much interest to farming as to fighting; and the fact remains, that excellent though Hesiod may have been as a man in all matters of life, he was not a great poet, hardly a poet at all.

If Alexander's criticism does but little injustice to Hesiod's claims to be counted a poet, it is a yet more just expression of the difference in the circumstances under which and the audience for which the two authors composed. Homer was, as a matter of fact, a composer for kings, and Hesiod for peasants. Homer took for a subject the quarrel between the divine Achilles and Agamemnon, king of men. Hesiod takes for his text the lawsuit between his brother and himself, poor farmers both, though not both honest. In Homer, kings are heroes, whose prowess it is the poet's privilege to sing of. In Hesiod, kings are the unjust judges who gave a verdict against the author, and are to be shown the error of their ways. From this difference in the subject and its treatment we may fairly infer a difference in the audience to which the two authors addressed themselves. Amongst farmers, who had themselves suffered from the injustice of kings, Hesiod's verses would be as welcome as was Homer's poetry in a palace; and Alexander's verdict shows the reception which would have been accorded to Hesiod's *Works and Days* by royal readers. Here, as elsewhere throughout the history of classical Greek literature, we see the reaction of audience on author, and the way in which the demands of the public determined the character of the literature.

If Homer and Hesiod differ in their subjects, they differ quite as much in what is more important, their objects; and this again is doubtless partly due to their difference in race and place. Homer's object is simply to tell his story in the best way. "Tell me, Muse, of that man so ready at need," is the prayer he puts up; or, "Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son." But Hesiod's object is not to tell a story, but to tell the truth. He informs us at the beginning of the *Theogony* that the Muses appeared to him by night, when he was with his flocks on the mountain Helicon, and said to him, "We can tell many lies like unto the truth, but we can, when we wish, say what is true." From this it is clear that Hesiod regarded the fictions of Homer with the same moral condemnation as Solon felt for acting, which, being the telling of lies, was not to be allowed in the state. The Spartans implied the same view by the synonym which they invented for lying—"Homerising;" while even with us, to "romance" is to "tell a story," in the uncomplimentary sense. The object of Hesiod, then, was to tell not a story, but the truth. Now a poet may choose for his poem anything he likes to take, from a field-mouse to the fall of man; and, provided that he produces work beautiful in itself and in accordance with the laws of poetry, criticism which carps at his choice of subject has no value. He may choose to tell the truth, and that will not mar his poetry. Nor will it make mere verses poetry, any more than it will make a bad verse scan. A statement may be true, yet not beautifully or poetically expressed: witness the axioms of Euclid. And the inference is equally false whether we say this is true and therefore poetical, or this is not true and therefore is not poetical. In fine, whatever the poet may wish to relate, his object is to produce poetry, while the object of Hesiod was not to produce poetry but to give instruction. The play of the imagination, which is essential to the poetical treatment of any theme, Hesiod evidently looked upon with suspicion: it resulted in "lies like the truth" indeed, but not the truth. Whereas he wished to give exact information about the best mode of conducting a farm, about the evil consequences of idleness and injustice, or about the pedigree of the gods. Hesiod is the representative of didactic poetry, of the poetry which is designed to instruct. The popularity he enjoyed in antiquity was due to the fact that he fulfilled his object. He did instruct, and he was used largely for purposes of instruction. But it is precisely because the aim of instruction wholly filled his field of vision to the exclusion of the poet's proper



object—the production of poetry—that he fails of being a poet.

We have said that Hesiod's didactic object was due to the place and race to which he belonged. He was an Æolian and a Bœotian. Bœotia did indeed produce isolated geniuses—a poet, Pindar; a general, Epaminondas. But the dulness of the atmosphere was matched by, if it was not the cause of, the dulness of the population. The Athenians called their neighbours "Bœotian pigs;" and country and people alike were better fitted for cultivation than culture. The Homeric poems, on the other hand, belonged in their origin to Asia Minor and the Ionian race, a place and people much better adapted for the development of the sense of beauty and for the growth of works of the imagination. Here it should be noticed, that although didactic poetry was developed in Bœotia and epic in Ionia, the two kinds of literature were not the exclusive possession, the one of the one people, the other of the other. As epic poetry has a history before Homer, so didactic poetry had a development before Hesiod. Poems as long as those of Hesiod, and consisting of a string of precepts but loosely bound together, could only have been built on the foundations laid by a long line of predecessors. As the Homeric poems are the literary and artistic version of various popular legends and myths and folk-lore woven together by the genius of the poet, so too the wise saws of which Hesiod's *Works and Days* is made up were drawn from the experience and also from the superstitions of the people. Further, as popular legends had received poetic treatment before Homer's time, so before Hesiod "the wisdom of many" had been shaped into form by "the wit of the few." Precepts for the conduct of life were put into pointed form both before and after Hesiod's time. Such were the sayings of the Seven Wise Men; and in later times at Athens, Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, had verses of this kind inscribed on the milestones and the images of Hermes.[1] Didactic poetry, however, did not limit itself to teaching morality. Hesiod gives advice concerning the condition of cattle as well as the conduct of life, on marriage as well as morality. And so, too, we find didactic passages in the Iliad, *e.g.*, the advice of Nestor to his son on the subject of racing; and in the lost epic *Thebais*, one of the most famous passages was a piece of didactic poetry. In fine, this kind of poetry, or rather this form of conveying instruction, did not originate with Hesiod, nor was it peculiar to the Æolian Bœotians. But

[1] One of these has survived.—C. I. G. i. 1a.

nowhere else and from no other poet did it receive such cultivation. The conditions in Bœotia were more favourable than elsewhere to the development of the seeds of didactic poetry. What were the conditions? A country adapted for farming, and a population more inclined to the realities of existence than to the realms of fancy. Hesiod was "a child of his time and people." His natural bent was to the giving of practical advice; and his audience, being practical men, preferred hints on farming to "lies," even though they were "like the truth," about Troy.

Under the title *Works and Days* there are comprised in all probability two works. There is the *Works and Days* proper, consisting of advice about farming and husbandry generally, and constituting the second half of the poem as it now stands. There is also another poem addressed to Hesiod's brother, and containing moral advice, which makes the first half of the poem in its present form. These two poems differ in character enough to make it probable that they were given to the public under different conditions. Now it is possible that the real *Works and Days* was first given to the public at some "musical" contest or literary competition. But it is not probable that Hesiod's warm reprobation of the corrupt and unjust kings was meant to compete for a prize. It would have great success with an audience of his neighbours gathered together to hear his words against an injustice from which they themselves had suffered or might suffer; and we may conjecture that it was in this way the poem was diffused, much as the lampoons of Archilochus in later times were recited by the author at a banquet, and circulated through the city by those who heard them. Probably this was also the way in which the real *Works and Days* was made public. A single recitation in a public festival would give the hearers no opportunity of carrying away in their memories so long a poem. We must suppose that Hesiod was frequently called upon to recite his poem in social gatherings, and that thus it became diffused.

We have now to ask why the matter of the *Works and Days*, which, like other didactic poetry, is essentially prosaic, was thrown into the form of verse? To this it has been replied that Hesiod had very strong feelings about the injustice of judges and the evil of idleness; and the strength of his feelings was so great, that his soul could not rest until he had given the most beautiful and imposing expression to his feelings that he could. And this it is said is the explanation of didactic poetry in general. Poetry in itself is not the proper vehicle for instruction and information: prose is the proper means. But



the attractive and enthralling beauty of what the author had to say appeared to him so great, that poetry was the only worthy expression for it; and into poetry he put it. Now we will not insist upon the fact that food for cattle and matters of manure cannot have this overpowering beauty. The fallacy of the explanation is, that it assumes that Hesiod and other didactic poets had before them the choice whether to compose in verse or prose. But in the seventh century B.C. no Greek author had any such choice. The very idea that it was possible to compose prose was unknown until the latter part of the sixth century, and then it was in Ionia that the discovery—an important one—was made. If a man had that within him which he felt he must give words to—if his thoughts on the order of things, or his knowledge of the practical matters of life, seemed to him too precious to die within his own breast, he had only one way of giving them extensive publicity, only one way of ensuring that they should live after him, and that was to put them into verse. A precept is useless if it cannot be remembered, and cannot be readily learnt by one person from another. Accordingly, amongst most peoples, rhyme, metre, or alliteration is used as an aid to memory. Rhyme and metre have indeed a beauty of their own, which doubtless is the secret of their original cultivation. But they have also the practical recommendation of enabling the memory to carry a larger amount of facts than it otherwise could retain; and so long as writing is unknown to or little used by a people, verse is not only a means of gratifying man's sense of beauty, but also bears the burdens which paper or parchment are subsequently made to carry.

Even when prose literature has come into existence, and when the function of verse has been specialised down to the sole purpose of adding to the beauty of expression, we still find that there survives, especially amongst the uneducated, a large amount of folk-lore in verse. Amongst this folk-lore there may generally be found rhymes about the weather, about the proper days for the discharge of certain domestic duties, and rough and ready maxims of conduct. Now this is precisely the sort of teaching found in Hesiod's *Works and Days*. The "works" are farming operations, the "days" are the days of the month on which it is lucky to do or avoid certain things. It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose that Hesiod was but following a custom, which already existed among the people, of couching useful information in verse, because it was easier to remember than it would have been if put into prose. It is true

that a short maxim may have a long life, even in prose, if it is put in a pithy form, which by its point or its ring strikes the imagination and impresses itself on the memory. Such maxims are the proverbs of all peoples. They play an important part in the education of a nation, and constitute the principal education of many illiterate people. But although brief maxims may, even when expressed in prose, have a wide and long popular existence, it is because they are brief. A dozen words in prose may be remembered if they are striking enough, but a dozen pages of prose not. Hesiod, therefore, who wrote a long work, had a very obvious reason for giving it the form of verse. His object was to give useful information; and however valuable his precepts were in themselves, his object would have been defeated if they were not extensively circulated. Now, if his sayings were to spread amongst the agricultural population of Bœotia, and be handed down from father to son, it was necessary that they should be in verse, for they were too long to be remembered or repeated otherwise; for whatever the date at which writing came into use in Greece, we may reasonably suppose that the tillers of the soil did no more reading in Greece than they did in England before the invention of the printing-press.

It is from the *Works and Days* and the introduction to the *Theogony* that we learn all we know about Hesiod's life. His father[1] came from Cyme in Æolis and settled in Ascra, at the foot of Mount Helicon, in Bœotia. There, as far as we know, Hesiod spent his life. After his father's death he lost his share of his father's property in a lawsuit brought against him by his brother Perses, who obtained a verdict by bribing the judges. This, however, seems not to have prevented Hesiod from obtaining, by careful farming, a livelihood sufficient to enable him to give assistance to his brother subsequently, when Perses was in need of aid. Nor did the work which he had to do as a farmer prevent him from composing didactic poetry. The Muses of Helicon inspired him to sing in the *Theogony* of the origin of the world and the history of the gods. His literary fame and triumphs were not limited to the audience that he found among his farmer neighbours, but on one occasion he competed with a poem at the funeral of King

[1] The name of his father is traditionally given as Dios. This probably is due to a misunderstanding of *Works and Days*, 299—

ἐργάζεν Πέρση Διὸς γένος.

Unless we correct the reading into Δίου γένος.



Amphidamas in Chalcis, and carried off the prize. The law-suit with his brother was the occasion of Hesiod's composing the poem which now forms the first part of the *Works and Days;* the appeals of Perses for assistance afforded him the opportunity for giving the advice contained in the real *Works and Days.* Other poems, of which we will speak shortly, he composed besides these, but they have not survived. Tradition says that he left Ascra and died, and was buried in Naupactus. There seem to have been two tombs, one in Naupactus, the other in Ascra, claiming to contain his bones; and this circumstance apparently gave rise to the myth commemorated by Pindar, that he lived two lives.

Hesiod's verses are not in themselves beautiful, nor does his subject, even when it of itself suggests poetical treatment, exalt his style above his ordinary prosaic level. He lacks imagination. But it is unfair to convert this into a reproach. His object was to give sound practical advice, and this he does in a practical, if prosaic, manner. He succeeds in what he aims at; and it argues ignorance of the conditions under which he composed to imagine, that because he necessarily composed in verse, he therefore necessarily aimed at an imaginative rendering of ideas. He says himself his aim was truth, not invention; and verse was the proper vehicle for his ideas, not because they required poetical rendering, but because it was an aid to the memory. To judge him fairly, and to understand wherein the merit consisted which made his name great in Greece, we must consider what he said, not how he said it. He spoke bravely and earnestly for the worth of work in itself, whether it brought wealth or not. He preached the faith that justice was better than injustice, both for men and cities. He took the side of right against wrong. Besides, he was eminently shrewd and practical. Trust no man, he says, without a witness—advice which the Greeks certainly would take care to have taught to their children. His morality was not so much above their level as to prevent their being influenced by it. What reward a man could find in giving to those who did not give to him, neither Hesiod nor his countrymen could divine. He formulated and they accepted the precept, Give to those only who give to you. This side of his morality lowers him in our eyes, but helps to explain his reputation in Greece.

The merit of Hesiod lies in his matter, not in the form with which he invested it; and it is illogical to disintegrate his poems because of their deficiency in organisation and artistic unity. Further, to plan and execute a work in which the

parts are duly subordinated one to another, implies not only imagination and a sense of beauty, but considerable mental grasp; and in this, too, Hesiod was lacking. In the *Works and Days*, the myth of Pandora is related in an unintelligent and unintelligible manner. In the *Theogony*, which is professedly a systematic version of the various beliefs about the gods and the origin of things current in Greece, it is obvious that the difficulty there is in understanding many parts is due to the fact that Hesiod himself did not understand what he was retailing.

Some critics, while accepting the *Works and Days* as it stands, have declared that though it is the work of Hesiod, the *Theogony* is not, as the Chorizontes or Separatists maintained that the Iliad was, but the Odyssey was not, the work of Homer. This view, in the case of Hesiod as of Homer, descends from antiquity. Pausanias, who flourished about A.D. 160, says[1] that, according to a local tradition current among the Bœotians near Mount Helicon, the only work of Hesiod's was the *Works and Days*, and to this view Pausanias gives his own firm adherence. But all earlier authorities unanimously ascribe the *Theogony* to Hesiod. The Alexandrian critics never suspected that it was spurious. Herodotus expressly says that Hesiod made a theogony.[2] Heraclitus refers to it.[3] Acusilaus, who flourished about B.C. 500, probably borrowed from it. Xenophanes (B.C. 570) expressly refers to it as Hesiod's work.[4] We have therefore to set against a mere tradition, existing in the time of Pausanias, about something that happened a thousand years before, the explicit statements of authors who lived six or seven hundred years nearer to Hesiod's time. There can be little doubt that, as far as external evidence goes, it is in favour of the *Theogony* being the work of Hesiod. And this must decide the question of its authorship.

The *Theogony* not only relates, as its name implies, the birth of the gods, but is also a cosmogony describing the origin of the universe. The poem is not the invention of Hesiod himself; it is his connected version of the floating beliefs and myths of his time, in which he has incorporated, probably, verses, and

[1] xi. 31, 4, Βοιωτῶν οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἑλικῶνα οἰκοῦντες παρειλημμένῃ δόξῃ λέγουσιν, ὡς Ἡσιοδου ἄλλο ποιήσαι οὐδέν, ἢ τὰ ἔργα.

[2] ii. 53.

[3] xxxv. ed. Bywater, refers to *Theog.* 123 and 748. Fr. xvi. only proves that Heraclitus knew Hesiod's works, not that he knew the *Theogony*.

[4] πάντα θεοῖς ἀνέθηκαν Ὅμηρος θ' Ἡσιοδός τε, Ὅσσα παρ' ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστιν, Οἵ πλεῖστ' ἐφθέγξαντο θεῶν ἀθεμίστια ἔργα, Κλέπτειν μοιχεύειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεύειν.



even whole passages, of traditional religious poems. In the beginning, according to his authorities, was Chaos. Out of Chaos came Earth, and Tartarus, and Love. From Chaos also sprung Erebos and Night. From Erebos and Night came Day and Æther. From Earth was born the Sky and the Mountains. Then the union of Earth and Sky produced the Ocean, Kronos, the Cyclops, and the Titans. The Sun and Moon were born from the Titans. The Sky (Uranus) was the first lord of the gods; but he was killed by his son, Kronos, and from his body sprang the Erinnyes and Aphrodite. Kronos himself was deposed by his son Zeus. The history of the dynasty of Zeus follows, and the poem ends with a list of the goddesses who married mortals.

Like the *Works and Days*, the *Theogony*, being a didactic poem, was used in Greece for educational purposes. From the orator Æschines we learn that Greek boys were made to learn the former, and from the rhetorician Libanius that even in the fourth century after Christ the *Theogony* was still taught.[1] But the *Theogony* was not only used as a manual of mythology in schools; as containing the oldest speculations of the race on the origin of the universe and of the gods, it was the subject of discussion among philosophers. The story goes that Epicurus received his first impulse to philosophy from the *Theogony;* and certainly the Stoic philosophers Zeno, Chrysippus, and Diogenes of Babylon wrote treatises on it, and endeavoured to interweave it with their physical philosophy. In earlier times philosophers treated it with less respect and more judgment. Heraclitus observed that it showed the difference between learning and understanding.[2] The criticism is a sound one. Hesiod heaped up all the myths that he was acquainted with in the *Theogony*, and his mythological learning was wide; but in many cases he seems not to have understood them well enough even to relate them intelligibly. Another philosopher, Xenophanes, criticised the work on moral grounds; every action that men consider immoral, theft, adultery, and deceit, Hesiod attributed to the gods. This criticism also is true; but the reproach affects Hesiod but little, since he did not invent these tales; he merely recorded them. The brutal stories found in the *Theogony*, *e.g.* those in which Kronos swallows his own

[1] Æschines *in Ctes.* 135, p. 73, quotes a verse, and says, λέξω δὲ κἀγὼ τὰ ἔπη· διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ οἶμαι ἡμᾶς παῖδας ὄντας τὰς τῶν ποιητῶν γνώμας ἐκμανθάνειν, ἵν' ἄνδρες ὄντες αὐτοῖς χρῶμεθα. Cf. Libanius, i. 502, 9, iv. 874.

[2] πολυμαθίη νόον οὐ διδάσκει. Ἡσίοδον γὰρ ἂν ἐδίδαξε καὶ Πυθαγόρην, κ.τ.λ. xvi. ed. Bywater.

children and mutilates his father Uranus, are descended from times when the Aryans were no more advanced in civilisation than the South Sea Islanders. Such stories are found all over the world, as flint arrow-heads and stone implements are found, and show that the mind of primitive man was everywhere influenced by the same analogies in the endeavour to solve the problem of the origin of things.

We have now to mention the other works ascribed to Hesiod. Of these, the *Shield of Hercules* alone survives. It is obviously inspired by the description of the shield of Achilles in Homer, and the diction contains reminiscences of Homeric phraseology. As literature, it possesses no great merit. The narrative is lifeless, the description of the shield inartistic. The introduction now prefixed to the poem does not belong to it, but to the *Eoæ* of Hesiod. It is said that Stesichorus, the lyric poet who lived about B.C. 600, expressly ascribed the *Shield* to Hesiod, but the critic Aristophanes of Byzantium (circa B.C. 200) declared it spurious, and his opinion has been unanimously accepted, on internal grounds, by modern writers.

Other works, now lost, such as the *Catalogue of Women*, the *Eoæ*, *Ægimios*, the *Teaching of Chiron*, the *Wedding of Keyx*, the *Melampodia*, were also ascribed to Hesiod, some perhaps justly, others because they were Hesiodic, *i.e.* didactic or genealogical, or like him in style. The most important of these works is the *Catalogue*. It probably formed a continuation of the *Theogony*, as it contained the genealogy of heroes, related in much the same way as the genealogy of the gods is related in the *Theogony*. It seems to have consisted of three books; and as the *Eoæ*, consisting of two books and treating of the same subject, was usually united with it in a work of five books altogether, it has sometimes been maintained that the *Catalogue* and the *Eoæ*[1] are but different names for the same work. But the fragments of them seem to show that the same myths were treated in a different way in the two works, and as the *Catalogue* was universally recognised in antiquity as the work of Hesiod, while there were doubts about the genuineness of the

[1] The title *Eoæ*, Ἠοῖαι, is a plural of the phrase ἡ οἵη, and the poem got its name from the fact that the history of each heroine began with the words ἡ οἵη. For instance, the fragment of the *Eoæ* which has been prefixed to the *Shield* begins—

ἡ οἵη προλιποῦσα δόμους καὶ πατρίδα γαῖαν
ἦλυθεν ἐς Θήβας Ἀλκμήνη.

The *Eoæ*, therefore, must have begun with some such statement as: Never were there women so fair as those of antiquity—or such as Alcmene; and every heroine was introduced with the words "or such as."



Eoæ, it is possible that not only were they different works, but by different authors. The references to Cyrene in the *Eoæ* make it probable that the poem was composed after that place came into the hands of the Greeks, *i.e.* about B.C. 620, and therefore some time after Hesiod's date.

Another genealogical poem, the *Naupactian Epic*, was also ascribed by some to Hesiod; others[1] ascribed it to a poet of whom we know nothing, Carcinos of Naupactus; others to a Milesian. We have no means of deciding whether Carcinos was the author, but the grounds on which it was assigned to Hesiod only suffice to show that, like the *Eoæ*, it was Hesiodic in character. That is to say, it was a genealogical poem; it resembled the *Catalogue* in that it celebrated the heroines of antiquity,[2] and it resembled the *Eoæ* in the fact that the history of each heroine was introduced with the inartistic formula "or such as," which implies that the poem began with some such phrase as "Never was woman so fair, or such as," Alcmene, or whoever the heroine was.

Genealogical poems took especial root in Greece, as epic proper owes its cultivation to the colonies in Asia Minor. These poems being of a semi-historical character, are valuable for the history of Greek literature, as showing that prose, which is the proper vehicle for history, and which was, as a matter of fact, first used for history, was only brought into use after verse had been many times tried for the purpose of recording history. At the same time they show by what slow degrees history began to disengage itself from myth. Amongst the authors of these semi-historical genealogical poems. the name of Chersias of Orchomenus has come down to us. He is said to have been a contemporary of Periander and Chilon. To Eumelus of Corinth, who was said to have composed the *Return*, were also ascribed the *Corinthian Epic*, the *Bougonia*. and *Europia*, which we may regard as semi-historical poems. Argos also, as well as Corinth, produced poetry of this kind, the *Phoronis* and *Danais*, whose authors are unknown. In Sparta, Cinæthon, a contemporary of Eumelus, who lived probably about B.C. 776. produced a genealogical poem. Athens had her representative in Hegesinus, who wrote the *Atthis*; and in later times in the colonies Asios of Samos wrote a genealogical poem amongst others.

The *Æyimios* and the *Wedding of Keyx*, which were ascribed to Hesiod, were narrative in character and were short epics. They originated among the Bœotians and Dorian Locrians, and

[1] Pausanias says Charon of Lampsacus.
[2] For this Pausanias, who had seen the poem, is our authority.

betray their origin by the fact that they, like the *Shield of Heracles*, took their subjects from the myths in which Heracles figured. Finally, the *Teaching of Chiron* was a development of the didactic side of Hesiod's poetry, as were also the *Great Works* and the *Astronomy*, and, in later times, the *Astrologia* of Cleostratus of Tenedos.

CHAPTER VII.

OTHER EPIC POETS AND OTHER WRITERS OF HEXAMETERS.

Besides Homer and the poets whose works were incorporated in after-times into the Epic Cycle, we find that there were other epic poets, whose works have perished entirely, or are represented by insignificant fragments only. With the doubtful exception of Peisander, all these poets belong to post-epic times; that is to say, they devoted themselves to epic composition at a time when genius had abandoned epic poetry for the cultivation of other kinds of literature. The epic age is the period in which genius carried epic poetry to its greatest height, and in which epic constituted the main if not the sole literary food of the nation. Although epic poems continued to be produced throughout the period of lyric poetry and of the drama, even until the rise of oratory, we may regard the epic age as ended and the lyric period inaugurated when, in B.C. 700, genius appeared for the first time in the field of lyric poetry in the person of Archilochus. The elements of lyric had existed long before this among the people, but the age of lyric only began with Archilochus, and when it began the epic age may be said to end.

We have therefore now to deal with authors who composed epics at a time when popular attention, and consequently the encouragement which national fame can give, was bestowed on other kinds of literature. Some epics composed under these unfavourable conditions were incorporated in the Epic Cycle, and have already been mentioned. Among the epic poets who remain to be mentioned, the most distinguished was the earliest, Peisander of Kamiros in Rhodes. Some authorities regarded him as belonging to the epic age; others, with more probability, assign B.C. 650 as his date, and he may be even more modern than that. He, like the other epic authors of post-epic times,



finding the cycle of Trojan myths already worked out, turned elsewhere for a subject, which he found in the adventures of Heracles. The subject had indeed been treated of before in short Hesiodic poems, such as the *Shield of Heracles* and the *Marriage of Keyx*. But these works, though epic in style, had only dealt with incidents in the life of the hero. It yet remained for some one to give in the epic style a systematic account of all the adventures of Heracles. This Peisander did in his *Heracleia*. The epic consisted of two books, and, as far as we can judge, seems to have been a well-planned work, possessing some claims to artistic unity and symmetry of detail, wherein it differed from the loose and unpoetical character of the genealogical poems attributed to Hesiod. Beyond this it is impossible for us to form for ourselves any independent judgment as to the literary merit of Peisander. It is to be noticed that, as we should expect, we do not find in classical authors any mention of Peisander. Peisander devoted himself to epic poetry at a time when no wide reputation was to be gained from it, and the audience to which he addressed himself was probably the narrow one of his own circle of friends. On what grounds the Alexandrian critics, who classed him along with Homer and Hesiod in their canon of epic poets, did so class him, we do not know; but a class which included Hesiod could not have been constituted simply on grounds of literary merit.

An interesting figure among these later epic poets is that of Panyasis, the uncle of Herodotus. Panyasis, the son of Polyarchus of Halicarnassus, lived about B.C. 500, in the time of the Persian wars. He was not merely a learned archæologist, a patient investigator, and a man of letters, but he was a politician and a patriot, and died in the cause of freedom. His native city was under the rule, not of a government of the citizens' own choice, but of a dynasty of tyrants maintained in their power by the arms and wealth of Persia. The movement of the Persian war afforded the party of freedom an opportunity to strike for liberty. Temporary success was followed by the return of the tyrants, and in the struggle Panyasis lost his life. Like Peisander, Panyasis took Heracles for the subject of his epic, and wrote a *Heracleia*. Peisander had treated the subject at greater length than had his predecessors, and Panyasis far outstripped Peisander. The *Heracleia* of Peisander consisted of two books, that of Panyasis of fourteen, and they numbered nine thousand verses. The fragments do not allow us to form an opinion on the literary worth of Panyasis' epic; and the statement made by Suidas that he was

ranked next to Homer is a testimonial of no great value, since we do not know by whom he was ranked next to Homer. Another statement made by Suidas, that Panyasis gave a fresh impulse to epic, which was nearly extinct, confirms what we have said with regard to Peisander, that the epic age was over. The *Heracleia* of Panyasis seems to have owed its length mainly to the learning with which it was crammed. The author was indefatigable in collecting local legends; and everything that diligent investigation could amass of this kind, Panyasis seems to have incorporated into his poem on Heracles. His antiquarian instincts, however, found better room for exercise in his *Ionica*. This was a semi-historical poem, seven thousand verses long, in which was embodied all the tradition, myth, and legend which Panyasis could collect about the early history of the Ionic race. Finally, we should notice that Panyasis' services to literature must not be measured by these poems alone; for Herodotus doubtless owed to his uncle much of his education and of his impulse to literature.

Antimachus of Colophon belonged to the generation before Plato. He seems to have been but little in Athens, to have spent most of his life in Colophon, and to have died at an advanced age. Besides an elegiac poem, *Lyde*, he wrote a very long epic, a *Thebaïs*. His contemporaries paid no more attention to him than to other epic poets of the post-epic age. It was only when criticism had declined that his epic was dragged by Hadrian from its merited obscurity, and ordered by the Emperor's decree thenceforth to take the place of Homer. A greater service rendered by Antimachus to literature was his edition of Homer. Other epic poets, of whom we know scarcely anything but their names, but who lived probably in post-epic times, were Zopyrus, Diphilus, Antimachus of Teos, Phædimus of Bisanthe, who wrote a *Heracleia* and also elegiac poems, and Diotimus.

Chœrilus of Samos, a contemporary of Herodotus, deserves separate mention, though he has shared the obscurity of Antimachus. Departing from the established custom of epic poets, which was to take the subjects of their poems from mythology, Chœrilus wrote a historical epic. The period he chose was the Persian war, and the title of his epic was *Persica* or *Perseïs*. The idea was doubtless suggested to him by the fact that Phrynichus and Æschylus had found a subject for tragedy in the same period. But Chœrilus seems not to have had the power to handle the theme properly. He was somewhat of a hack, and devoted himself to writing complimentary verses to distinguished



men, such as Lysander, the conqueror of Athens, and Archelaus, king of Macedonia. His *Persica* was impartially enough devoted to the praise of Athens.

Equally noteworthy as a departure from the ordinary round of epic subjects is the *Arimaspeia* of Aristeas. The poem takes its name from the fabulous people of the one-eyed Arimaspes. Whereas other epic poets, and the Tragedians as well, confined themselves to mythology, Aristeas of Proconnesus in the Propontis seems to have drawn on his imagination for his subject, and to have had a great taste for the marvellous. As to the date of this poet, some conjectured him to be older even than Homer, but all that we know is that he was older than Herodotus, from whom (iv. 13–15) what we know of Aristeas is drawn. Inasmuch as Aristeas laid the scene of his epic among the Hyperboreans, he may be conjectured to have had some points in common with the mystic school of poets; for the Hyperboreans were a people regarded as specially beloved by Apollo. To the mystic school also belonged Abaris, who professed, or was said in later times, to have come from the Hyperboreans on a mission from Apollo. He brought with him an arrow as a sign that he was sent by Apollo, according to Herodotus (iv. 36); but the visionaries of the Neo-Platonic school in later times related that Abaris rode through the air on this arrow, and thus traversed the world. Oracles, hymns of purification, and an epic were ascribed to him, but we have no means of judging whether the works ascribed to him were really his. About the works of the Cretan Epimenides we are equally ill-informed, though it admits of no doubt that he was a historical personage. He was summoned by the Athenians to purify their city from the pollution brought upon it by Cylon, about B.C. 610; and according to Plato, who, however, lived two centuries later, he possessed a profound insight into spiritual things. Tales of a wonderful character were told about him too. He was brought up by the Nymphæ and possessed the power of projecting his soul into space.

Special mention must be made of the Orphic poets. Whether there ever was such a person as Orpheus, "who with his lute made trees Bow themselves as he did please," is a point on which, in the total absence of evidence, we are reduced to conjecture. On the one hand, the stories which are told of his marvellous powers of music and of his descent to the nether world to bring back his wife, Eurydice, seem to class him among legendary personages. On the other hand, there seem to have existed religious hymns of great antiquity, universally regarded as the

work of Orpheus, which may have been the production of some poet older even than Homer. At any rate, it is certain that in historic times associations of men calling themselves "followers of Orpheus" were devoted to the worship of Dionysos-Zagreus. Dionysos in this aspect was a different god from the god of wine, and the bacchanalia of the followers of Orpheus very different from other bacchanalian rites. Dionysos-Zagreus was a god of the nether world, and the followers of Orpheus led an ascetic life in search of purity and in hope of future blessedness. When they had partaken of the flesh offered as a sacrifice at their initiation, they thenceforward renounced meat. Like Egyptian priests, they wore white raiment.

Religious hymns bearing the name of Orpheus seem to have been current among the people from early times; but an Orphic literature first arose about the time of the Persian wars. Even before then, Orphic views had made themselves felt in religious literature, as, for instance, in the *Theogony* of Pherecydes of Syros, fragments of which still survive. But at the beginning of the fifth century we find many Orphic poets, Persinus of Miletus, Timocles of Syracuse, Diognetus, Brontinus, and Cercops; and a theogony entirely Orphic. The most celebrated of the Orphic poets of this period is Onomacritus, who was employed by the Pisistratidæ to collect and arrange oracles affecting Athens, and was convicted by the poet Lasos of interpolating forgeries. There seems little reason to doubt that in this age, though more extensively in Neo-Platonic times, hymns and poems were composed which were not perhaps deliberate forgeries, but speedily came to be uncritically received as the works of Orpheus, or as possessing a much greater antiquity than was really theirs.

The oracles which Onomacritus was employed by the Pisistratidæ to collect were those of Musæus. Although regarded as the pupil of Orpheus, Musæus seems to have written poetry which was connected with the Eleusinian mysteries, and his prophecies related exclusively to Attica. Closely connected with Musæus was Eumolpus. He was, according to the popular tradition, descended from Musæus. It does not seem that he composed poetry himself, or, if he did, it perished early; but he preserved and transmitted the verses of Musæus. Another name which occurs in connection with that of Musæus is Bacis. Some of his prophecies are quoted by Herodotus (viii. 20, 77, 96, ix. 43), and are regarded by the historian as a complete refutation of the sceptical views existing in his time with regard to prophecies. Another prophet quoted by Herodotus

is an Athenian named Lysistratus. All these prophecies, as also those of the Delphian and other oracles, are in hexameter verse; and in their diction they show the influence of Homer, and to a less extent of Hesiod.

To complete our enumeration of the less important writers of hexameters, we ought to mention the anonymous authors of epitaphs. When the pentameter was invented, elegiac couplets, consisting of a hexameter and a pentameter, became the universal metre for epitaphs. But before the invention of the pentameter, hexameter was used. An example is preserved in the so-called Homeric Epigrams (iii.), which professes to have been inscribed on the tomb of Midas. There are also found hexameter epitaphs amongst the oldest stone records which we possess.[1]

Finally, this is the proper place for us to speak of the philosophers who wrote in hexameters, Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. If it fell within the scope of this work to trace the filiation of philosophic systems, we should properly treat of these philosophers in connection with those who wrote in prose, since the form in which they expressed themselves would not justify us in separating them. But we are concerned with them only in their literary aspect, and have not to do with their philosophy. For the history of literature, the importance of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles is that they show how difficult a thing it was for a nation, which for centuries had composed in verse alone, to learn to write in prose. About the same time that Xenophanes in Elea was formulating his philosophy in hexameters, that is, about B.C. 570, Pherecydes, a native of Scyros, one of the Cyclades, and a pupil of the famous Thales, was making the earliest attempt to write in prose. Some few specimens of his work have come down to us. In everything but metre they are poetry, not prose; and whereas in poetry an author could compose artistic sentences of some complexity, in prose at this time he could only ejaculate short and simple expressions, in their baldness rather resembling a child's attempt at writing than a philosopher's. A little later than this, about B.C. 547, another philosopher, Anaximander of Miletus, again made an effort to write prose, with more clearness but scarcely less awkwardness than his predecessor. Half a century later, although the philosophers Anaximenes and Heraclitus had carried on the work of establishing prose, and the logographers Cadmus, Hecatæus, and Acusilaus, the predecessors of the historians, had written

[1] Röhl, *I. Ant.*, 37, 62, 78, 340, 342, 343, 407, 531.

geographical, genealogical, and semi-historical works in prose, we find that Parmenides preferred poetry. Prose in the hands of Heraclitus was even less fitted for an intelligible exposition of philosophy than was poetry. Even as late as B.C. 444, the year in which Thurii was founded, a time when Herodotus had already composed and recited much of his history, the first great work in prose, Empedocles still wrote in verse.

This last fact is instructive, because it directs our attention to the circumstance that, besides the difficulty of writing prose, there were difficulties in the way of reading prose. It is sometimes, if not generally, said that prose, or at least a prose literature, cannot be developed unless there exists a reading public, and the existence of a reading public depends upon the development of the means of multiplying and diffusing copies of a manuscript. But in the works of the Orators we have a prose literature which was not designed for a reading public. Nay, more; the development of prose as an artistic expression of thought, possessing a beauty and a rhythm of its own, distinct from but as marked as those of poetry, is the work of the Orators, whose object was to produce, not a written literature, but periods addressed to the ear of their audience. For this purpose, all that is necessary is that the writing should be easy enough for the author to put down his thoughts, without excessive and distracting labour. Now, in B.C. 444 the art of writing was far enough developed for this, as the existence of the history of Herodotus shows; and even in the time of Xenophanes, B.C. 570, this may have been the case; for writing had then been known in Greece for a hundred and thirty years.

If, then, Empedocles, as late as B.C. 444, preferred to use poetry, we may reasonably conjecture that one reason at least for his preference was that the Greek public listened more readily to poetry, to which it was accustomed, than to inartistic prose. It was only about this time that Greek audiences were learning to listen to prose, whether the unaffected prose of Herodotus, or the artificial and florid rhetoric of Gorgias. When we go back more than a century to the time of Xenophanes, the case is still clearer. The author who wrote in prose might indeed find a public in the private audience of pupils or friends whom he collected together to listen to his writings; but the author who aimed at a wider publicity, and wished to gain the ear of the assembled population of the city, could only succeed in his purpose if he wrote in verse, and declaimed his verses at some public festival, the object of which was to afford an opportunity for the production of

poetical compositions. The former method was that adopted by the philosophers who wrote in prose; the latter that in which Xenophanes published his works.[1]

But it must not be inferred that the connection between philosophy and poetry was accidental, or merely a matter of form, due solely and wholly to the difficulty of writing and diffusing prose. There is also an internal bond, and a reason in the nature of the two things for their connection. A subject of philosophy may be treated of by poetry, and philosophy may deal with its own subjects poetically; but it is only in early times that the connection between them is maintained. With the development of knowledge philosophy breaks away from poetry, and each is specialised to its proper work and methods. This process of specialisation is not peculiar to poetry and philosophy, but is the law of the development of knowledge in all its branches. In the earliest stages of a nation's intellectual history, not only philosophy, but all the nation's knowledge is comprised in poetry. The works of Hesiod, for instance, are an encyclopædia of the knowledge of the Greeks of his time. His *Theogony* contains not only the nation's theology, but its earliest speculations on physical philosophy and the origin of the universe. The *Catalogue of Women* and his genealogical works were the only history recorded, and led the way to the genealogies of the logographers, who paved the way for history. In the *Works and Days* we have not only a manual of practical knowledge, but a treatise on moral philosophy in embryo. But by degrees the various branches of knowledge comprised in the poetry of Hesiod began to break away from poetry and poetical treatment, and to gain a separate existence, an appropriate mode of expression and methods of their own. The genealogical poems were followed by the prose genealogies of the logographers, which in their turn were displaced by the history of Herodotus. History, again, when it had finally split off from poetry, was found to contain within it another department of knowledge, geography, which eventually, with the increase of knowledge, was developed out of history, as history had been evolved out of poetry; and in the present day, physical geography and political geography are each receiving a special evolution.

A similar process of specialisation took place in philosophy. For long, theology and philosophy were inseparable: from philosophy proper, physical philosophy had to be detached; and then moral philosophy had to win an existence of its own,

[1] Diog. Laërt. ix. 18, *αὐτὸς ἐῤῥαψῴδει τὰ ἑαυτοῦ.*

independent of the philosophy which speculates on first principles and the nature of things. But it was only gradually that philosophy escaped from poetry, and we have here only to do with its first unsuccessful attempts. Although, as we have seen, the origin of things is a subject which may be dealt with by poetry, and was dealt with in the various theogonies, the methods by which a solution of the problem may be attempted are different, and are not all equally capable of poetic expression or consistent with a poet's manner of thought. The method may be scientific, that is, may consist in the observation of facts—experiment is a later discovery, unknown to the Greeks—in recording them, drawing inductions from them, and so eventually reaching the end in view. But this is an essentially prosaic process; and the Ionic philosophers who employed it were naturally, we may almost say necessarily, driven to attempt to write in prose. On the other hand, there were philosophers who declared that the senses, our only means of observing facts, are wholly untrustworthy. They are all subject to illusions, and it is only by exercising our reason that we can detect the illusion and ascertain the truth. Instead, therefore, of trusting to the senses, which deceive us, we must rely solely upon reason, and excogitate the truth out of the mind. Now this method of reaching conclusions is not inconsistent with the poet's way of viewing things. He too draws upon his own internal stores, and creates out of his own genius what did not exist before. And it was Xenophanes, by nature a poet and the author of lyric poetry of considerable merit, and his follower Parmenides, also a poet, who invented this method and founded the Eleatic school of philosophy. It was therefore the method employed in philosophy which largely determined whether it should detach itself from poetry, as in the case of Ionic philosophy, or remain in the pleasing fetters of verse, as in the case of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles.

Xenophanes was born in Colophon, which was situated on the coast of Asia Minor, not far from Ephesus. He lived certainly to the age of ninety-one, for Diogenes Laertius (ix. 19) quotes some verses in which Xenophanes says that since the time when he was twenty-five years of age he had spent sixty-seven years in mental activity. At some point in this long life he left his native city and settled down in Elea. This town, the modern Castellamare, situated on the west coast of South Italy, a little north of Point Palinurum in Lucania, was a colony founded by the Phocians in B.C 536. Xenophanes composed an epic poem on the foundation of the city, and it



has been suggested that he himself took part in the first colonisation of the city. In any case, it seems probable that he was fairly advanced in years at the time of the foundation of Elea, for he lived before the time of Heraclitus, whose date is about B.C. 500.

In addition to the epic poem in two thousand verses already mentioned, which he is said to have composed on the subject of the foundation of Elea, but from which no quotations are made in Greek literature, we have quotations from lyric poems —not exclusively didactic or moralising in tone, but festive— and a doubtful iambic. The *Parodies* from which Athenæus (ii. 54E) professes to quote half a-dozen lines, did not belong to the branch of literature invented, according to Aristotle, by Hegemon, a contemporary of Epicharmus, for Hegemon lived after Xenophanes. But, as the verses themselves show, they were sarcastic in tone, and probably Athenæus had no other reason for calling them "Parodies." The same explanation would suffice to account for the fact that *Silli*, a species of satiric poetry, were ascribed to Xenophanes. He could not have written *Silli*, for this kind of literature was only invented centuries after his date by Timon the Phliasian, surnamed the Sillographer. Eustathius, the commentator of Homer, who lived about A.D. 1160, not only, following Strabo, ascribes *Silli* to Xenophanes, but even traces their origin back to the Iliad (ii. 212), thus showing that the only real ground for ascribing them to Xenophanes was the existence of satiric passages in his poetry. The error seems to have had additional life given to it by the fact that Timon the Sillographer in one of his *Silli* introduced Xenophanes making jest of Homer and other poets.

Finally, the philosophy of Xenophanes was couched in hexameters. A few verses are quoted by Greek authors of various dates, which, however, would not have sufficed to give us much idea of his philosophy, did we not possess a partial *résumé* in prose drawn from Theophrastus, the pupil of Aristotle, by Simplicius; and another, said, though it is doubtful, to be the work of Aristotle. If Xenophanes ever committed his works to writing, they must have perished early; for not only does Simplicius, the commentator of Aristotle, say that he could not obtain his works, but other authors who cite verses by Xenophanes were evidently quoting at second-hand. Earlier authorities, such as Theophrastus, Empedocles, and Heraclitus, from whom later writers, like Athenæus, Diogenes Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, and others, derived their knowledge of Xenophanes,

give the sense more frequently than the actual words of their author, although his works were probably known, if not in writing, by oral tradition, to at least Heraclitus, who lived but little later. The title which late authorities give to Xenophanes' philosophical work is *On Nature;*[1] but this is probably unwarranted. It is a title which fits and belongs to works of the Ionic philosophers who wrote on physics and science, but is unsuitable to the metaphysics of Xenophanes, and is based on no good authority.

Xenophanes is a most interesting figure among the philosophers and authors of his time, and we cannot but regret that we possess so little of his work. He was a man of great originality, and the power of his mind is proved by the fact that the method which he applied to philosophy continued to be exercised and developed through many generations of modern as well as of ancient philosophers. Although he founded a school of philosophy, the Eleatic, he was a man of many interests, and his literary activity, as we have seen, was by no means limited to a single branch. He possessed powers of penetration which were not confined to the service of philosophy, but were exercised on matters of more obvious interest. Although he himself composed drinking-songs, and was not insensible to the pleasures which, in moderation, enhance the charm of life, he noted and protested against the growing luxury that proved the intellectual ruin of the Ionic cities, which had done so much for the literature and science of Greece. Nor did the evils of excessive athleticism escape his observation and reproof. If a man, he says, wins a foot-race or a boxing-match, or even a horse-race, in the national games, he is the object of his fellow-citizens' admiration; he has an official front-seat awarded to him at all entertainments, is maintained at the public expense, and is presented with a gift to be an heirloom for ever. Yet how much less worthy is the athlete than the philosopher! Wherein does the winning of a race conduce to the good government of a city or to the interests of the people? Men's minds are much astray when they set philosophy below fleetness of foot. The justice of Xenophanes' protest is confirmed by its repetition a century or more later by tragedians and orators. If Xenophanes thus sets himself against the current of public opinion on matters athletic, he displayed equal courage in his criticisms on Hesiod and Homer. Everything, he said, which men consider it disgraceful to do, these poets represent the gods as doing. Here again Xenophanes was led by no mere striving

[1] *De Natura, περὶ φύσεως.*



after cheap originality of criticism and self-supposed superiority to the common view. Philosophy for generations, and through its most distinguished exponents, echoed the protests which he first made in the name of morality. Against the anthropomorphism of his age and nation Xenophanes brought to bear all the varied resources of his many-sided ability. His philosophy was designed not for a chosen few, but for the general ear, as is shown by the fact that he delivered it in poetry; and if, in the summaries of it which Theophrastus and others have handed down to us, the reasoning seems close and subtle, the quotations which they make in the words of Xenophanes himself show that he expressed pointed arguments in a manner that any of his audience could understand. Men think, he says with profound contempt, that the gods have birth, speak, have bodies, and wear clothes like themselves! Why, if horses or cows could draw like men, they would represent the gods as cows or horses! The theory of the transmigration of souls, which Pythagoras and his followers believed in, met with as little mercy from Xenophanes as did the anthropomorphism of the people and the poets. According to the somewhat malicious invention of Xenophanes, Pythagoras checked a man who was beating a dog with the words, "Stay your hand! in the dog is the soul of one dear to me; I recognise his voice."

If Xenophanes was the founder and the first of the Eleatic school, Parmenides was the greatest of its philosophers. Parmenides, born at Elea, belonged to a wealthy and distinguished family. He was a pupil of Xenophanes, and he also studied under Aminias and Diochætes, Pythagorean philosophers. But from the latter, in accordance with the system of Pythagoreanism, he seems to have gained rather stimulation to the pursuit of philosophy than any body of definite doctrine. Later in life, he in his turn handed on the philosophy he had elaborated to his pupils Zeno and Melissus. Although a native of Elea, he seems to have been in communication with, or rather to have met most of the philosophers of his time, whether they belonged, like Empedocles, to Sicily, or, like Heraclitus, to so distant a place as Ephesus. The wealth of Parmenides doubtless afforded him the means to travel where he would; and we fortunately have in Plato the record of the fact that he visited Athens and there met Socrates, then a young man. Parmenides came, according to Plato, for the celebration of the great Athenian festival, the Panathenæa, at a time when he was of mature years and had already achieved a reputation. This visit is of interest for two reasons: it gives us the date of Parmenides,

and it shows how philosophy was diffused in Greece. As for the date, Socrates was born B.C. 468, and if we suppose that at the time of the meeting Socrates was sixteen years of age—and we can hardly suppose that he was younger—Parmenides visited Athens in B.C. 452; and he was between sixty and seventy years of age at the time. During the visit he met many Athenians, with whom he discussed points of philosophy. This method of diffusing his views was specially suited to Parmenides, because the development of an argument by means of questioning the pupil or auditor—the dialectic method—was a characteristic of the school to which he belonged. By him, probably, for the first time the young Socrates heard the method employed, which he was subsequently to develop to its full perfection. But although Parmenides travelled far, and learned, discussed, taught, and wrote on philosophy, he neither neglected his duties as a citizen nor performed them perfunctorily. He proposed laws which were adopted and perpetuated; and his public life redounded as much to his reputation as his philosophy. In his writings he declares that the study of philosophy and the successful pursuit of truth demand purity and piety in the student; and his life confirmed what his theory taught.

We possess fragments of Parmenides' poetry of considerable length. His sole work seems to have been a poem, the title of which, *On Nature*, as it goes back to Theophrastus, may be genuine. though, if it is, the word "nature" must be used in an extended sense, for Parmenides was rather a metaphysician than a man of science. The contrast between reason and sense, and the superiority of the former, are the points implied in the philosophy of Xenophanes, which Parmenides developed and made into the foundation of his philosophy. The senses are subject to illusion, and are inferior to the reason. The latter alone can apprehend truth, the former can only lead to conjecture. In the pursuit of knowledge we have to learn to distinguish between reality and appearances; and whereas all that we know by means of the senses is the appearances of things, it is by reason that we have to discover what they really are. Reality is truth, and truth is reason; therefore reason is the only reality. The evidence of the senses does not go beyond mere appearances and conjecture. Thought and existence are the same. On this distinction between truth, reason, and reality, on the one hand, and conjecture, sense, and appearance, on the other, is based the division of Parmenides' poem into the two parts *On Truth* and *On Conjecture*. They have been regarded, but on insufficient grounds, as two distinct works.

It is probable that Parmenides did not formally distinguish them.

The mystic or allegorical character of Parmenides' writing in the part of his poem which dealt with *Conjecture* may be illustrated by the interesting introduction to the poem, which is conceived in the same strain. He represents himself as conveyed by steeds, as far as thought can reach, along the famous road by which is reached the goddess who initiates the learned into all secrets. The way to light was shown him by the Nymphs of the Sun, who led him to the gates where are the ways of darkness and light. There they besought admittance for him from the guardian of the gate of light, Justice, who bade him welcome, if it was that piety had brought him on this road so remote from those the vulgar frequent. She then warns him of the arduous task there is before him, to acquire the sum of knowledge and to distinguish truth from the conjecture of the vulgar: and the poem begins.

The steeds which conveyed Parmenides aloft are the lofty impulses of the philosophic mind. The goddess to whom they conveyed him is Heavenly Truth, and the road which leads to her is philosophy. The two ways of light and darkness are the two kinds of knowledge, truth and conjecture. The nymphs are Nymphs of the Sun because truth is light; and the guardian of the gate is Justice because only the just and pious can pursue philosophy and attain truth. The allegory is poetical, and testifies to the exalted conception Parmenides possessed of the position of philosophy and the attributes necessary in the philosopher. It helps us further to understand why Parmenides wrote in poetry, in two ways: first, it shows his poetic tendencies; next, it was quite beyond the capacities of prose, as it existed in his time, to bear the burden of bodying forth so deep an allegory. The prose of Plato could and did do greater work than this, but Plato was not born for a generation after Parmenides had made his reputation. We are fortunate in possessing so long a fragment of the Eleatic philosopher's work, and we probably have to thank Plato for it indirectly. Parmenides' visit to Athens created great interest there in his philosophy. It made a great impression on Socrates, and through him on Plato, who has added lustre, by his dialogue entitled *Parmenides*, to the name. Plato himself studied Parmenides' writings, as did Plato's pupil Aristotle and his pupil Theophrastus; and even as late as the fifth century after Christ a copy of his works seems to have existed in the possession of Proclus, the Neo-Platonic philosopher.

Empedocles is a remarkable figure in the history of Greek literature, and a number of remarkable stories have collected round his name. Perhaps the most widely known is the fable alluded to by Horace, according to which Empedocles terminated an extraordinary career by leaping into the crater of Ætna, in order that he might seem to have vanished like a god, as he pretended to be, and was only betrayed by the fact that an eruption shortly afterwards ejected one of his sandals. The story has as little truth in it as has the orthodox explanation, which is to the effect that Empedocles accidentally fell into the crater while studying volcanic phenomena. In the time, and for centuries after the time, of Empedocles, the very existence of a crater seems to have been unknown, from the simple fact that no one ventured to explore the volcano. The fable is a caricature, and independent of the testimony which it bears to the wit of the Sicilians who invented it, it is valuable because, being a good caricature, it departs but little from the real features of the character which it derides. Empedocles did study natural science, and he did give himself out to be of divine origin, but he was no impostor in science, and in his divine origin he at least firmly believed. His is a character full of apparent contradictions: he was an abstract thinker, but a practical politician; he was steeped in mysticism, but studied the material welfare of his fellow-citizens; though he achieved wonders in natural science, he preferred to claim supernatural powers; in him artistic prose, according to Aristotle, has its ultimate founder, yet he wrote in verse; he is the most poetical of philosophers, and yet his works differ from prose only in that they are in metrical form.

A little younger than the philosopher Anaxagoras, who was born B.C. 500, and a little older than the rhetorician Gorgias, the date of whose birth was B.C. 480, Empedocles may be inferred to have been born about B.C. 490. The place of his birth was Agrigentum in Sicily, a city which in splendour rivalled Syracuse. He belonged to a wealthy family, for his grandfather, after whom he was named, won the chariot race at the Olympian games, and only kings and persons of great wealth could afford to breed or purchase horses capable of carrying off this prize. We have no explicit information about his youth, but the educational influences which existed in Sicily and in Agrigentum, and to which doubtless he was subjected, explain his subsequent career. The mysticism of his philosophy was imbibed by him from the Pythagoreans, who were scattered through Sicily and South Italy. His natural science was pro-



bably derived from the celebrated physicians Acron and Pausanias, who flourished in Sicily in his time. Finally, the eloquence which served him in his political life was not his peculiar attribute, but distinguished the Sicilian race, to whom the germs of oratory developed later in Athens were due. The wealth and position which Empedocles by his birth enjoyed brought political duties with them; and when Thero the tyrant, whose rule had raised Agrigentum to the highest elevation it attained, had died, Empedocles, following the traditions of his family, assisted in establishing the liberty which he subsequently did so much to preserve. He purged oligarchy from the city, and declined to accept the sole rule of the state, which the citizens offered him. But throughout he was somewhat theatrical: he aimed at effect. When he appeared in public, it was with a dress and surroundings deliberately designed to create the impression that Empedocles must not be confounded with other people. Yet this was not affectation; it was the nature of the man. If he posed, he had an unaffected admiration for the attitudes he struck. If he arrayed himself in theatrical costume, he also wrote an appreciative description of it in his philosophical works. When we find him in the *Iatrica* professing not only to heal all known diseases, but ready to undertake the cure of old age and to provide a remedy for death, we should be doing him an injustice to dismiss him as a quack. He, like a medicine-man among the negroes, also professed to bring or avert rain, and undoubtedly believed in his ability to do what he professed as much as any medicine-man, and with greater reason, since his acquirements in natural science were considerable, and his mysticism obscured the limits which Nature has placed on Science. His unequivocal statement in the *Katharmoi* that he is no mortal, but an immortal god, is itself a testimony to his good faith, being but a piece of his faith in himself. At the same time, as we shall shortly see, the assertion loses something of its crudeness when viewed through the haze of his mystic philosophy.

It is necessary to have some knowledge of the character of Empedocles in order to appreciate his literary worth at its proper value. In his case, if ever, the style is the man. In the first place, he clothed his scientific writings in verse instead of prose, in the same way as he wore purple, for the sake of effect.[1] In the next place, however, we have to recognise that, notwithstanding his pretence, he did possess solid literary merit. His

[1] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1, *οὐδὲν δὲ κοινὸν ἐστιν Ὁμήρῳ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον διὸ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μᾶλλον ἢ ποιητήν.*

mysticism was adapted for poetry; it lent itself to metaphorical expression and lofty diction; and Aristotle, who denies that the medical works of Empedocles are poetry, although they are in verse, also calls attention to his poetical qualities elsewhere.[1] Empedocles speaks of himself as giving oracles to the multitude who thronged round him clamouring for his supernatural assistance, and his style is frequently oracular in character. He was grandiose in his writing as in his bearing. Artificiality is breathed in his verses, and was the breath of his life: the poetical devices and tricks of expression which marked the early rhetoricians are to be traced even in the fragments we possess; they are alluded to by Aristotle, who seems to have regarded him, in spite of his writing in verse, as the first of the rhetoricians,[2] and were probably transmitted by Empedocles to his pupil Gorgias, who transplanted them to Athens.

According to Diogenes Laertius, Aristotle ascribed to Empedocles tragedies and other works, the *Invasion of Xerxes*, a hymn to Apollo, and a *Politics*. But as no author quotes a single line from any of these works, and as a later poet named Empedocles seems to have certainly composed tragedies, it is not improbable that Diogenes, who was a somewhat careless compiler, has confounded the two authors named Empedocles. The works by the philosopher Empedocles of which we possess fragments are the *Katharmoi*, *Iatrica*, *Physics*, and some epigrams. In the *Katharmoi*, or *Songs of Purification*, he professes, as the name indicates, to purify from sin or crime all who come to him, as in the *Iatrica*, or *Songs of Healing*, he professed to cure all diseases, old age, and death. His medical knowledge was indeed extensive for his age, and he is said to have effected some remarkable cures, restoring the apparently dead, and so on. But he professed also to have supernatural powers, and this profession is connected with the mysticism which found its exposition in the *Physics*, or poem on Nature. Into the mixture of mysticism and scientific speculation which made up the philosophy of Empedocles it is beyond our province to go. We will only say that he reached the conception of four elements, earth, air, fire, and water, or, as he preferred mystically to call them, Zeus, Hera, Aïdoneus, and Nestis (the last name seems to have been his own invention). These ele-

[1] In the lost Dialogue on the Poets, Aristotle said, Ὁμηρικὸς ὁ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ δεινὸς περὶ τὴν φράσιν γέγονε, μεταφορικός τε ὢν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς περὶ ποιητικὴν ἐπιτεύγμασι χρώμενος, as we learn from Diogenes Laertius, viii. 57.

[2] Sext. Emp. vii. 6 says, Ἐμπεδοκλέα μὲν γὰρ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶ πρῶτον ῥητορικὴν κεκινηκέναι.



ments are indestructible. They may be combined, and the compounds into which they combine may be reduced by dissolution to the four elements again. But for these processes two principles are required: the principle of combination, which he calls mystically *Friendship*, and which is the *Love* of Parmenides and the Pythagoreans; and the principle of dissolution, which he calls *Discord*. The tendency of *Friendship* operating on the four elements is to produce a *Sphere*, that is, to give to the universe a perfect shape; but there exists the opposite tendency of *Discord*, and the history of the universe is the resultant of their conflict. The principle of *Discord*, however, is not limited to the material world in its action. It operates also in the moral world. It prompts a dæmon to some crime, and then for thrice ten thousand years the dæmon, in exile from heaven, has to inhabit the bodies of men and living creatures. The poem *On Nature* begins with a statement of this law, and the declaration that Empedocles is himself a dæmon undergoing the punishment of a mortal body. After this exordium, the first book seems to have dealt with the four elements, the second with the nature and condition of man, the third with the gods and things divine.

Somewhat late in life Empedocles is said to have commenced his travels. He journeyed to the Peloponnesus, attended the Olympian games, and there recited his *Songs of Purification*. How long a period elapsed before he returned to Sicily is unknown, but it is reported that he found it impossible to gain admission into his native town when he did return, and he resumed his travels. He is said to have visited Athens, and it is not improbable that, like most celebrated men of the age, he visited the intellectual centre of Greece. He died between sixty and seventy years of age. Many strange stories are told of his death, the mode of which remains unknown.

BOOK II.

LYRIC POETRY.

CHAPTER I.

THE ELEGIAC AND IAMBIC POETS.

Epic poetry was succeeded in Greece by lyric poetry. The germs of lyric poetry already existed in the epic period, but for their development it was necessary that a change should occur in the conditions of social and political life. The political and social changes which developed the germs of lyric poetry were the overthrow of regal governments, the foundation of colonies, and the extension of commerce. The overthrow of royal government tended to the liberty of the citizens. The people ceased to live for the sake of supporting a king, and began to live for themselves and their country. This shift of material interests was followed by a corresponding shift in literary interest. So long as the king was the state, Priam's fortunes were necessarily the poet's materials; but when the citizens became the state, their interests, their hopes, and their fears became the theme which interested them and inspired the poet. The tendency of colonisation worked to the same end. Settlers are compelled to rely on their own exertions; birth and position go for little in the new country; it is the man of most capacity and energy who comes to the top. In a colony, the individual citizen gained an importance which was beyond his reach in the old country. It is hardly necessary to say that the extension of commerce had a similar result. As commerce grew, there opened before the individual citizen the possibility of attaining to wealth and importance.

The result of these changes was lyric poetry. Men's thoughts were fixed on the present, not on the past. Politically and socially a break had been made. The ideal past, depicted in epic poetry, was no longer felt to have any relation to the



present, and was, therefore, no longer fitted to supply inspiration to the poet or to engage the attention of his hearers. The hour called not for a narrative of the fight round Troy, but for lays such as those of Callinus or Tyrtæus, which could rouse a man to fight "for the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods."

The first difference between epic and lyric is that the former is narrative and the latter is the expression of emotion. But this difference implies another. In epic the poet never himself appears. He narrates everything, but never gives his own view—as his own view—of anything. The essence of lyric, on the other hand, is that in it the poet expresses his own personal emotions. Lyric is personal, epic impersonal; or, as the same idea is sometimes expressed, the former is subjective, the latter objective.

The conditions under which lyric poetry was developed in Greece gave it some characteristics which distinguish it from, and are brought into relief by, the lyric poetry of other nations. Modern lyric comprises everything within its range; anything which touches the poet and moves him to song may provide a subject—Chapman's Homer or the west wind, a nation or a skylark, the future or the past. But Greek lyric poetry, born of a reaction from contemplation of the past to action in the present, had not this universal range. It draws its themes from, and is always related to, the present. Solon addresses his fellow-citizens not on the past, but on the present condition of Attica. Theognis deals with the politics, Tyrtæus with the wars, of his own time. And although, in choral poetry, the theme is frequently mythical, such poetry always was composed for, and related to, a definite religious festival. In fact, it was "occasional poetry," as is clearly seen in those odes of Pindar which were written to celebrate the occasion of some victory in the various national games of Greece. Greek lyric poetry is, then, distinguished from other lyric poetry by always having reference to the present, and this is due to the conditions under which it was developed. It is also distinguished by the occasional presence of mythical element. This, as we have said, occurs in choral lyrics written for some festival, and in honour of the gods. In this, too, we have a trace of the conditions under which Greek lyric was developed, for the mythical element is an inheritance from the epic period. Another inheritance, and also another distinctive feature of Greek lyric, is the gnomic or didactic element. This was apparent in Hesiod, and reappears

most markedly in Theognis, although it is not confined to him, but is present in all varieties of Greek lyric.

We have considered the social and political conditions under which the germs of lyric poetry were developed, and we have seen how the characteristics peculiar to Greek lyric were due to the conditions of its development. We may now proceed to consider the germs themselves. They were of two kinds—religious chants and popular songs. No specimen of the former has come down to us, but we may reasonably conjecture that they had the same origin and were much the same in kind as the Saliaric hymns of the Romans. They were probably metrical invocations of the gods, of a simple and inartistic kind, addressing the god in all his various attributes and with his various names, containing much repetition and tautology, and doing the duty of liturgies. They were preserved by hereditary priesthoods, being transmitted from generation to generation, and receiving occasional additions. In Attica the Eumolpidæ were a hereditary priesthood of this kind, connected with the worship of Demeter at Eleusis, whose hymns were traditionally referred to Pamphus as their author. But as Apollo was the god of song, it was with his cult that the most important of these religious chants were associated. The Pæan which was the name of the form of hymn used in the worship of Apollo, seems to have been of two kinds, corresponding to two attributes of the god. He was the god of victory, and to him the Greeks in Homer sing praises and thanksgiving for victory. The hymn itself was probably sung by a single voice, and the worshippers sang as a chorus the refrain, "Io Pæan! Io Pæan!" But Apollo was also the god who sent pestilence, and the people, when threatened or stricken with plague, prayed in chorus to him for deliverance. The Nome was another form of hymn with which Apollo was worshipped, and seems to be distinguished from the Pæan by the fact that it was sung by a priest, and was not a special prayer for deliverance from pestilence or a special thanksgiving for victory, but praise of a more general character. Naturally the songs in honour of Apollo flourished most at the two most important centres of his worship, Delos and Delphi. The origin of the Nome was traditionally ascribed to Delphi, and Chrysothemis and Philammon, mythical personages, were credited with its authorship. The hymns which for generations had been sung at Delos were connected with the name of Olen. The fact that Olen was said to have been a Lycian, taken in connection with the existence in Delos of a Phœnician worship (imported from Lycia) before the Ionic worship, may indi-



cate that the hymns ascribed to him had a foreign element in them.

A few inconsiderable fragments of songs of the people, quoted by Athenæus, Plutarch, Pollux, scholiasts and grammarians, have come down to us, and from the same sources we hear of other songs of which we have no specimens. Some of these fragments are certainly of comparatively late date, but as songs of the people change very little in the course of time, we may learn something even from the later fragments. The reason that so few of these songs have been preserved is that the literary lyric killed the popular song, and it is only in those parts of Greece which remained comparatively uncultured that the people's songs survived. Thus it was in Sparta that cradle-songs flourished most, and from Sparta come a couple of fragments of songs which accompanied dancing. In one of these fragments the dancers encourage each other to keep on dancing; the other consists of three lines, one of which was uttered by the young men, the next by the old men, and the third by the boys. From Bottiæa we have a fragment—"Away to Athens, hie!"—of the song which the women of Bottiæa sang while dancing. Elsewhere also the custom of singing while dancing prevailed; and about another fragment which runs, "Where are my roses? where are my violets? where are my beautiful flowers? Here are your roses; here are your violets; here are your beautiful flowers," Athenæus says that the accompanying dance was mimetic. It may be noticed incidentally that men and women do not seem to have danced together. Games, as well as dancing, were accompanied by songs. Greek boys played a game, in which one boy, being blindfolded, sang a verse, "I will hunt a fly of brass;" to which the other boys replied, "You may hunt, but you will not catch us;" and inflicted blows on him with straps, till he caught one of them. Greek girls also had a game of a less violent description, with questions and answers to be sung. Greek children invoked the appearance of the sun in much the same way as in the English "Rain, rain, go away," &c. The most interesting of these children's songs is the Rhodian Swallow-song, which has been fortunately preserved, apparently complete, by Athenæus. In the spring the boys of Rhodes went round from house to house singing this song, in which they announced the return of the swallow with the returning year, and demanded to be supplied with cheese and wine. The Crow-song seems to have been of the same kind: the boys went about with crows in their hands, and making much the same request as in the Swallow-song.

In these songs the boys played at beggars, but real beggars also had their songs, although we have no specimen of them. Working men, bakers, and rowers all had songs to accompany and lighten their labours. The women had their weaving-songs; at Elis, their vintage-songs; and they sang while washing clothes and while working in the mill. The song of the reapers was called Lityerses, and as this was the name of the son of Midias, king of Phrygia, the song may have come from that country. The shepherds' songs, at any rate in some instances, seem to have been of a sentimental kind, and we have a fragment of one which told a story of unrequited love. Love-songs naturally formed an important part of the popular songs, and in Locris such songs were much cultivated; but we have a fragment of one only. Drinking-songs can hardly be reckoned among the pre-lyric popular songs. They were introduced during the lyrical period by Terpander from Asia Minor, and eventually some, such as these celebrating the glorious deed of Harmodius and Aristogiton, attained great popularity, and were genuine songs of the people. More important, as the roots of lyrical poetry, than any of the songs of the people yet mentioned, were the wedding-songs and dirges. The dirge was known to Homer, and as all peoples seem to possess something of the kind, it may well have been original with the Greeks, although indications are not wanting that some foreign —Carian—elements were introduced. This form of song was afterwards developed by Pindar, and came to be of much importance in the lyrical part of Greek tragedy. The wedding-song was also known to Homer, who calls it the Hymenæus. It became literary and lyrical in the hands of Pindar and Sappho, and, as the Epithalamion, it has passed into the lyric poetry of all European nations. Finally, amongst the songs of the people we have to notice an important class borrowed from the East. Their common feature is that they are laments for the untimely and undeserved death of some beauteous youth. In all cases they seem to have been of Oriental origin, to have originally lamented the departure or death of summer, and to have been amalgamated with some local Greek myth. Thus the Linos, of which we have a fragment (perhaps not in its original form), came from Phenicia (where, as also in Cyprus and Bithynia, Herodotus recognised it), and was connected with the story of the beauteous Linos, who was killed by Apollo for challenging him to a contest in song. The fragment that we have ascribes the invention of song to Linos, and relates the death of Linos and the lament of the Muses for him. The



Linos was sung by a single voice, and the refrain "Ai Linon! Ai Linon!" by a chorus. The derivation of Ai Linon may be the Semitic *ai le nu*, woe is us. In Tegea of Arcadia the Greeks explained the lamentation as being for the death of Skephros, who was killed by his brother. Sterility fell on the land in consequence, and an oracle ordered a yearly festival, at which Skephros was to be mourned for; and hence the song was called the Skephros. The Hyacinth song has the same origin; it was localised in Sparta, and came there through the island of Cythera, a Phenician settlement of old. Most famous of all these lamentations was that for Adonis. The Phenician origin of this song, and of the festival at which it was sung, is indicated by the mythological device of making Adonis the son of Phœnix; by the obviously Semitic derivation of the word (*adonai*, lord), and by the fact that the song and festival can be traced back to Samos, and thence to Cyprus, whither they first spread from Phenicia.

Having seen what were the germs of lyric poetry, and what were the conditions under which they were developed, we may now proceed to consider the various kinds of lyric poetry. They are three, the Elegiac, the Iambic, and the Lyric, in the narrower or specific sense, or, as it is sometimes called, Melic. They are alike in that they are all subjective, expressing the poet's own emotions as such, and that they were all designed for a musical accompaniment. They differ in metre; and in that Elegy and Iambic poetry are more subjective than Melic; and that choral odes belong to Melic. In dialect, Elegy and Iambic poetry, as they originated in Ionia, were Ionic: Melic poetry drew on the other dialects. Choruses, having originated both amongst the Dorians and the Æolians, contain both Æolic and Doric, though the latter came in course of time to predominate. Melic songs, as opposed to choruses, had no fixed dialect, but each poet used his native dialect.

The origin of elegy is closely connected with the improvements made in the flute in Phrygia. Elegy spread with the flute from Ionia to Greece, and the word *elegy* itself can hardly be regarded as a Greek one, although whether it is derived from an Armenian word (*elêgu*) meaning a flute or reed, or from another Armenian word (*jilarakan*) meaning "mournful," is uncertain. The original meaning of the word in Greek seems to have included both ideas, and to have been a funeral dirge on the flute. Then the word seems to have been used of a distich consisting of a hexameter and a pentameter; and then to have been applied to any poem made up of such

distiches. It is only in Roman and late Greek times that elegies were written to be read. Before then, elegies, like all other poetry of the creative period of Greek literature, were composed for oral delivery, and were always sung or recited to a flute accompaniment. The history of Greek elegy falls into three periods. The first extends from the origin of elegy, about B.C. 700, to the rise of the drama. The next extends to Alexandrine times, which constitute the third period. The elegy originated in Ionia, always continued to be written in Ionic, and the best representatives of this division of lyric poetry were Ionians, *e.g.*, Callinus and Mimnermus. During the first and most flourishing period of elegy, it was used for many other purposes than that of expressing lamentations and regret. Callinus used it for martial purposes. With Tyrtæus and Solon it served to convey political precepts. In the hands of Theognis it was largely gnomic or sententious. Mimnermus brought it back to its originally mournful character. In this period also it was used for lighter purposes, love, epigram, and the praise of wine. In the second period, elegy was overshadowed by the drama, which absorbed the best lyric talent and grew at the expense of elegy. In the Alexandrine, the third period, it became, as we see from the specimens preserved in the Anthology, the vehicle for conveying the mythological learning and the love-songs of the literati of the time.

The first elegiac poet, as far as we know, was Callinus of Ephesus. His date cannot be fixed with precision, but as it seems from his fragments that the town of Magnesia was still in existence in his time, and as from the fragments of Archilochus it seems that by his time Magnesia had been destroyed, Callinus was probably rather senior to Archilochus, and lived about B.C. 700. Whether Callinus invented the pentameter and combined it with the hexameter, we do not know. His elegiacs are not rudimentary, but we have no reason to believe that any other poet had cultivated this form of verse before him, and there is nothing improbable in supposing that he may have invented them and yet brought them to the stage of development which we find them in with him. In point of metre, the elegiac is not greatly different from the verse of epic poetry, for the pentameter is only a mutilated hexameter. In style, too, we see from the fragments of Callinus that Greek poetry only gradually developed from epic to lyric, and did not pass by a bound from the one stage to the other. The language of Callinus reminds us of Homer, and the spirit is much the same. For the fragments which we possess (one of twenty



lines and three insignificant ones) we are indebted to Stobæus the anthologist and Strabo the geographer. Strabo probably knew little or nothing more of his works, and took these quotations from works by Demetrius of Skepsis (a pupil of Aristarchus) and Callisthenes. That Callinus' elegies should have been lost so early is not astonishing, when we reflect that they were probably not committed to writing, and that having only an oral, not a literary existence, they would be peculiarly liable to perish as fast as other elegiac poets arose with competing verses. The long fragment which has come down to us is of a martial kind, encouraging his fellow-citizens to advance against the foe by picturing the disgrace of a coward's death and the glory of falling nobly. For what occasion these verses were composed, whether for the war which was carried on between the poet's own city, Ephesus, and Magnesia, and which eventually resulted in the victory of the former, or in anticipation of an attack by the Cimmerians, who about this time invaded Lydia, defeated Midas, and threatened the Greek cities, is uncertain. But the verses themselves have a fine vigour, and ring out like a true call to battle. It has, indeed, been maintained that most of this fragment is not by Callinus, but by Tyrtæus; but the weight of critical authority is against the supposition.

About the same time as, but junior to, Callinus was Archilochus, who also wrote elegies, but whose fame is his iambics. As other poets also frequently wrote both iambics and elegiacs, we shall find it convenient to treat the two classes of writers side by side; and this mode of proceeding has the further justification that, different in character as iambic originally was from elegiac poetry, the two kinds of poetry had certain important features in common, and they ran through much the same career. They resemble each other, in the first place, in being of Ionian origin, being written in the Ionic dialect, and being peculiarly and distinctively expressive of the qualities of the Ionic character. Their careers are alike in that both soon lost the character which they at first possessed; elegy, as we have seen, came soon to be employed for many other purposes than the expression of lamentation, and iambic poetry, as we shall see, was at first the means used by Archilochus for conveying personal satire, but lost that character in the hands of Solon, although he used iambic verse as a means of combating his personal opponents. Eventually, as the verse of dialogue in tragedy, it served to express every emotion of the human heart. Finally, as elegiac poetry was overshadowed by the drama, so the drama absorbed iambic poetry, which, however, did not,

like elegy, revive again, except in the modified form of the choliambics used by late fable writers, such as Babrius.

Although Archilochus was the founder of iambic poetry, he can hardly be regarded as the inventor of the iambus, and the origin of the verse is uncertain. The usual account is that it originated in the worship of Demeter. At the festivals of this goddess a license was permitted which resembled that of the saturnalia at Rome. Every restraint at other times put upon the tongue was on these occasions removed; abuse, jests, derision, and satire might be cast by any man against any other; and from this custom, and from a Greek word meaning "to cast," the word iambics and the abusive nature of the verse are usually derived. With this view further harmonises the fact that the worship of Demeter was in great favour in the isle of Paros, where Archilochus was born. But the word iambus suggests, by its resemblance, a connection with the words dithyrambus, thriambus, which are in all probability not of Greek origin; and the only evidence for the connection of the iambus with Demeter is the story that it was the maid Iambe who, by her jests, first brought a smile to the face of Demeter after the loss of her daughter.

About the life of Archilochus we know little more than is to be inferred from the fragments of his works. These are unfortunately few; but his poetry is so subjective, the man is so open and frank on all that concerns him, that there is scarcely a fragment, however inconsiderable in size, which does not give us some information about his life and character. In estimating his character it is necessary always to bear in mind his complete innocence of disguise and his even reckless frankness, because the best known fact in his life—the vengeance which he took in his verses on Lycambes for first betrothing his daughter Neobule to him and then refusing him her hand—is liable to misinterpretation; and the more so since the later Greeks, in order to enhance—perhaps to comprehend—the tremendous nature of his onslaught, added the story that in consequence of his verses both Lycambes and Neobule committed suicide. This might lead us to infer that there was something underhand or even cowardly in this mode of vengeance—that Archilochus' weapons were not only as keen but as venomous as Pope's. But this would be to entirely misread his life and character. Archilochus was not only a poet of unsurpassed vigour, he was a man of energy and action who touched life at all points. Impetuous and daring, he led a life of adventure and romance. Born in the island of Paros, a block of purest marble, whose perpendi-



cular cliffs run up two thousand feet from the sea, and whose beauty he saw with a poet's eye (Fragment 51), Archilochus there became familiar with a sailor's life, and learned to love the sea, over which he was to wander often. When quite a youth, having his youthful and ardent imagination fired with fabulous reports of gold-mines in Thasos, he sailed for that ancient seat of Phenician mining. His expectations were high, and his disappointment therefore profound. The vehemence of his expression marks the force of the impression which Thasos made on him; it is as rough as a donkey's back, there is not one fine or lovely or beautiful place in it (Fr. 21). In this frame of mind he would be ready to believe that his El Dorado, if not situated in the island of Thasos, might be on the mainland over against it; and, even if gold were no more to be found there than on the island, at least there would be fighting. Thither, therefore, he went, and there he was not disappointed in the fighting. After this he must have returned to Paros, and there have met Neobule. His love for her was as passionate as might be expected in a man of his poetical and impetuous temperament, and some of his fragments (84, 85) still breathe the flame with which he was consumed. That he was capable of deep feeling is shown by his elegy on the death of his sister's husband, and his capacity for suffering may be gauged by the fact that he could only find for it a remedy which is no remedy—to endure and not whine like a woman (66). This capacity for the depths of suffering implies a corresponding capacity for the exaltation of joy, and it was with all the ardour and all the tenderness of this richly endowed nature that he loved Neobule. He sighed "were it to touch but her hand" (71), and we have the fragments (29, 30) of a perfectly lovely picture of Neobule (in which she was drawn with all her own beauty and the beauty lent to her by the eye of her artist-lover), with a myrtle branch and rose in her hand, and her tresses overshadowing her shoulders. As his love had been great and beyond all measure, so when he was betrayed his fury knew no bounds. Every taunt which the violence of passion could suggest and the force of satiric genius could launch he directed against her who had deceived him. To us this attack on a woman has something cowardly in it; but the standard of morality is a shifting one, and Archilochus, whether judged by the standard of his own or of our time, was not a coward. This will be best understood if we consider the famous verses (6) in which he relates his flight from a battle in Thrace, and of the loss of his shield. He tells the story lightly. Some

Saian has the shield, and exults in the trophy. Archilochus did not abandon it willingly, but he only just escaped death; so he bids good-bye to the shield; he can buy another. This view, that the cost of a shield was the only loss he suffered in running away, throws a light on the character of Archilochus. These verses are due neither to the effrontery of shamelessness nor to the self-torture of a morbid mind. For the former to be the case, Archilochus must have been a coward; for the latter, he must have thought himself one. Horace, who abandoned his shield at Philippi (and imitated these verses of Archilochus), was no warrior, and consequently, being a man of the world, felt that he was not disgraced. Demosthenes, who fled from Chæronea, was also no warrior, but had a higher nature, and felt, probably unreasonably, that he was disgraced. But Archilochus was a warrior; he was a free-lance (24); he sailed from shore to shore, trusting, as he says (23), his life to the embrace of the wave; he fought in many lands, and eventually, in Eubœa, he fell in battle. If, then, he could jest over his flight, it was partly because his valour was tried and above suspicion; partly because his frank nature scorned concealment; and mainly because his fighting experience had taught him that victory does not always crown the brave, and that there are times when even the brave must fly or be killed uselessly. In other words, on this point his morality was that of the mercenary. Unfortunately, that was his morality on other matters also. There was, indeed, much chivalry in his nature, *e.g.*, he will not insult a dead foe (69), nor be overweening in the hour of triumph, nor abject in defeat, and will take arms against his troubles (66); but supreme over all motives is vengeance (65). "One thing I can—requite with great ill the man who does me ill." This limitation of his chivalry explains his attack on Neobule.

As a poet, a warrior, a sea-rover, a colonist, a political partisan, an accepted suitor, a disappointed and infuriated lover, Archilochus touched life at all points, and there was no quarter of the activity into which citizen-life was then breaking which he did not throw himself into with all the force of his vigorous nature. If from the poetry of Tyrtæus and Solon we learn much of the internal political condition of Sparta and Athens, from the poetry of Archilochus we get valuable light on the life, manners, and thought of the time. Thus we see that the position of women was one of much greater freedom, socially, than was the case in Athens and among the Ionic Greeks generally at a later date; and we find, rather



to our surprise, that marriage was preceded by a term of love-making. At the same time we see (if 19 is really genuine) that the hetæra was already in the field, and that her position was as openly recognised then as later. The thought, too, of the time is reflected even in our scanty fragments to a certain extent. Archilochus no more propounds to himself or his audience the great problem of the meaning of life than did Homer. The Greeks had not yet, apparently, begun to think. The old gods still in appearance hold their old place. They are still there to be prayed to; but in one important respect they are not quite the same as they were in Epic, for in Archilochus, as in Greek lyric poetry generally, they have ceased to do anything. Motionless they remain, and Archilochus recognises them in a general way, especially when he is giving moral advice to a friend; but he speaks with more confidence when he says fate and fortune settle everything. His enjoyment of the beauty and pleasures of life was marred by no speculative doubts on religion and morality. Suffering led him to no searchings of heart; his comment was that weeping would not diminish, and enjoying himself would not increase the evil (13). The sunlight and open air of his life did not allow him to be haunted by such a question as, Why should we live? He is even far from the stage at which the advice to eat, drink, and be merry can be given; for to him and to the Greeks of his time such a recommendation would have seemed superfluous. The only indication, and that is casual and indirect, of any reflection on the deeper problems of life which is to be found in Archilochus is interesting, both as being characteristic of him and as showing that, although the old religion remained externally much the same, there were at work beneath the surface tendencies of a destructive nature. In one of his fables (88) the fox prays, "O Zeus, Father Zeus, thine is power in heaven; thou seest the deeds of men that they are good and bad, and in beasts too thou visitest insolence and justice." To thus say that the beasts are quite as moral as man, and that the gods take as much interest in rewarding and punishing the one class as the other, is a piece of cynical cleverness which required the genius and the recklessness of Archilochus to conceive and to utter, as it also shows that, when thought was turned in this direction, it was not in support of the old creeds.

From Archilochus to Simonides of Amorgos—what a falling off! Simonides, like Archilochus, was a colonist, and moved from his native island Samos to the island Amorgos, from which he gets the epithet which serves to distinguish him

from the later and more famous Simonides. But Simonides of Amorgos was a very different kind of colonist from Archilochus. Instead of the romance in which Archilochus, the poet-warrior, seemed to always move, we become conscious in Simonides of the principle of strict attention to business, which better suits grocery than poetry. We have, indeed, in passing from Archilochus to Simonides, passed from the action of one set of the general conditions under which lyric poetry developed to that of another. The liberty of the individual citizen was fostered in its growth not only by the violent revolution of the sword, but also by the quiet revolution effected by the expansion of commerce. The wandering and reckless Archilochus, whose weapons were at the service of those who could pay for them, but whose allegiance was rendered to none but the god of war and the Muses, represents the former set of conditions, while the prosaic, domestic, and querulous Simonides breathes the air of the latter. The only fragments of Simonides of importance are one (1) of 24 lines and another (7) of 118 lines, both in iambics. The former is good advice to a young man. Simonides explains (probably to his son) that one never knows what will happen; that some men fall ill and die; others fight and get killed; others, for the sake of a living, go to sea and get drowned, and others commit suicide: trouble is universal, and the moral is to avoid it as much as possible. It is sometimes said, we may remark, that the poetry of Simonides is sober, and it has at least the appearance of having been written in old age. The other fragment is in the same strain as this. It is a description of women, who are divided into ten classes: to the first class Heaven has given the qualities of the pig, to the second those of the fox, to the next those of the dog; and so the poet plods on conscientiously through his 119 lines and his ten classes, each of which he dockets and puts by carefully labelled with its ticket; and, in conclusion, for fear any specimens of the race should be left unprovided for by his methodical treatment, he utters an anathema on women in general. To these two fragments should perhaps be added another, which is generally included amongst the remains of Simonides, the younger, of Cos; it is an elegy, which quotes the famous line of Homer that compares the generations of men to the leaves of trees. With this line as a text, the author proceeds to remark that hope springs in the breast of young men, who think they will never die or be ill, in which they are very foolish.

The first thing that strikes us in reading the remains of Simonides is—how limited is his horizon! When in the first



fragment his eye takes the widest sweep over human life and activity that it can, he comprehends precisely what is seen by the smug bourgeois. He knows that some men spend their lives on the sea, but when he goes beyond the fact, and presumes to divine their motive, the only one which his range of emotions and experience can suggest is that they do it to earn a living. Such people, he tells his young friend, get drowned. With this, contrast the line in which Archilochus (51) bids farewell to life on the sea. Simonides also knows that men fight (and get killed), but their motives for doing so he does not attempt even to conjecture. But when he returns from his excursion into these unfamiliar fields of human activity, and plants his foot within the domestic circle, and gets on the subject of that domestic grievance—woman—then what he says possesses, if not great depth, at any rate great length.

The roving, fighting life of Archilochus, chequered by victory and defeat, by the adventures of the gold-seeker, by the passion and disappointment of love, by the carouses of the camp, and the strife of politics, afforded a rich variety of material to the artist's eye and the poet's mind; but the dull weary round of daily work could afford Simonides no stimulus to poetry. It would, in fact, seem that commerce may have—as Freytag shows in his novel "Soll und Haben"—its romance, but its poetry hardly. The result of the conditions under which Simonides produced his work is that there is no joy, no sense of beauty, no play of fancy in it. He bids no farewell to the beauty of his native island. That life may be beautiful and joyous he does not seem to know. He knows, indeed, that if you are married, you can never have a whole day's peace (7. 99), but beyond this negative idea he cannot lift his thoughts. Of all vigour and eager activity he is quite innocent: the most energetic demonstration he seems to contemplate is not to dwell on one's misfortunes (1. 24). The public for whom Simonides wrote indicates the difference between him and Archilochus. The latter wrote his verses to be sung over the wine to his boon-companions, amongst whom, we may be sure, were to be found all the wittiest and cleverest men of the place in which he happened to be, and with whom his reckless strokes of irony and satire, and his finest poetic fancy, would find ready appreciation. Simonides' verses, as we have said, are advice to a young man.

Touching the question of how much truth there is in Simonides' views on the women of his time: in view of the resemblance there is between him and Hesiod, both in the narrow,

carking spirit of their verse and in their unfavourable estimate of women, we might at first be inclined to think that Simonides was not drawing on his own observation, but was simply working out in a spirit of literary conventionality and tradition a theme which he had borrowed from his epic predecessor. But towards the end of the fragment we find a couple of verses (112, 113)—"Every man praises his own wife and depreciates his neighbour's; but we are all in the same plight without knowing it"—which seem to show that, when Simonides and his friends met together for the recreation of quiet conversation, their wives were a frequent topic, and that Simonides in his verses is but giving expression to the views of the honest burghers of Amorgos. The last twenty verses, too, of the fragment, when the author has conscientiously discharged the task of labelling all the ten classes of women, and speaks with that burden off his mind, positively rise to a modified warmth of feeling which in Simonides must be taken to represent the fire of conviction. He even, when hinting at a scandal, ventures on an audacious aposiopesis, which the sympathetic reader at once understands to have been originally accompanied by a solemn motion of Simonides' head conveying much meaning. We may then regard what Simonides says on this subject as not a mere literary exercise, but as the result of his observation and experience; and we have to estimate it. In the first place, we see from his other fragment (1), addressed probably to his son, that he took a gloomy view of life. He saw trouble everywhere and no remedy for trouble. It is probable, therefore, that when, out of the ten classes into which he divides women, he only admits one—the women to whom the qualities of the bee have been assigned by the gods—to be good, he is colouring his observations with the same subjective and gloomy view which in the other fragment permits him to see nothing but miserable ends to human lives, and in the elegy, which is probably by him, and not by the other Simonides, permits him to see nothing in life but death. His condemnation of the women of his time contains then some falsity: how much truth it contains we cannot say. What we learn from Archilochus makes it improbable that the custom—borrowed by the Ionians from the East—which certainly prevailed later, of shutting women up, was dominant at this time; and all we are in a position to say is, that if it was, there was probably a considerable amount of truth in his diatribe. One other reflection we have to make: the hetæra, we learn from Archilochus, had already made her appearance; and it is when liaisons with such women are frequent among husbands that in literature we find complaints about wives.



There remain three writers of elegiacs for us to mention, of whom one was a poet: Tyrtæus, Mimnermus, and Solon. The fragments of Tyrtæus are, in accordance with the legend which represents him as inspiring the Spartans with courage, warlike in character. As poetry, they are but "the hoarse monotony of verse lowered to the level of a Spartan understanding." Their effect on the Spartans, however, was great. During a campaign his elegies were sung in camp after the evening meal. His Embateria or March-songs were sung before and during the battle; and as the custom was handed down from generation to generation of singing them before the king's tent, they became something in the nature of a national hymn, to which they are the only approach in Greek literature. Mimnermus of Colophon (or Smyrna) was indeed a poet, and the scanty remains of his elegies make us regret what we have lost of him. Solon wrote in verse because prose was not yet invented, and his fragments, valuable as they are to the historian, have little interest for the student of literature.

CHAPTER II.

LYRIC POETRY: MELIC.

MELIC, the third division of lyric poetry, derives its name from the Greek word *melos*, which originally means a member or part, then a strophe or part of a poem, and then verse sung to music. Melic poetry was composed in strophes, and it was also always sung to music; so that it is uncertain whether the term is derived from the second or the third meaning of the word *melos*. It is an objection to deriving it from the second meaning that nomes, which are certainly melic, are not written in strophes; on the other hand, although melic poetry was always accompanied by music, so too—in the creative period of Greek literature—were the other divisions of lyric poetry, elegiac and iambic. It is, however, clear that music took a much more prominent part in melic than in the other two kinds of lyric poetry. Elegies and iambics were probably not always sung, but mostly recited; and were not accompanied by music throughout, but prefaced and followed by a prelude and symphony; and probably in the pauses a few notes were sounded. On the other hand, the various metres in melic pos-

sessed much greater flexibility than do elegiacs or iambics, and are thereby much more fitted to be set to music.

Melic poetry falls into two classes, according as it was sung by a chorus or by one person. It must not, however, be inferred from this that the difference between the two kinds of melic was merely that between a chorus and a solo—a difference which in Greek music would not be very great, since the only exception to the Greek custom of a chorus singing in unison was singing in diapason. A chorus implies organisation; and the organisation in Greece was public; consequently the objects for which choruses were organised were public or national, that is to say, they were acts of public worship, thanksgivings to the gods, prayers to avert evil, or hymns of praise or celebration. The song, on the other hand, which is sung by a single person needs no such organisation, and is dependent on no such conditions, but belongs to private life, and is the ready expression of the individual's joy or sorrow. Thus, the chorus is public and religious, and the song is private and expressive of every emotion other than that of worship. Further, as elegiac and iambic poetry were the work of the Ionic race, so chorus was the work of the Dorian, song of the Æolian race. But here a qualification becomes necessary. Although Æolian poetry was distinctively individual both in subject, treatment, and delivery, yet, as the individual, even in his private capacity, at times comes into relation with the public, as in the case of the marriage ceremony or the funeral dirge, Æolian poetry necessarily becomes choral and religious at times, as in the case of the epithalamion, hymenæus, and threnos or dirge. So, too, the public in its collective capacity sometimes interests itself in the individual, when, for instance, he has rendered services to the state and is praised for them, or has conferred honour on his town by a victory in the national games; and thus Dorian poetry, in the case of encomia and epinikia, without ceasing to be choral, occasionally passes beyond the sphere of religion and assumes a private character. Another difference between Dorian and Æolian melic is in their metrical structure. The former, as being choral, deliberately organised, publicly performed, and more formal, is composed of larger and more elaborate strophes than is Æolian poetry, and, in addition to strophe and antistrophe has an epode, which Æolian has not. The epode is directly connected with the movements of the chorus; for the chorus whilst singing the strophe moved round the altar to the right, whilst singing the antistrophe to the left, and then whilst standing in front of the altar the epode. Æolian songs, not

being acts of worship, involved no such movement and had no epode. Finally, we may notice that a further consequence of the religious character of Dorian and choral lyric is that praise of the gods naturally led the poet to relate the works of the gods, and thus choral lyric naturally has an epic element in it of a narrative and objective character. So, too, it is a consequence of the personal character of Æolian song that the poet did not confine himself to portraying his own feelings and experiences, but frequently threw himself into the position of others, and gave poetical form to the emotions which a certain imagined situation would give rise to. To take a modern illustration, the lyric poet may either body forth his own feelings, as Shelley did in the "Stanzas on Dejection, written near Naples," or he may project himself into the position and sing the lament of a woman deserted and betrayed, as does the author of "O waly, waly, up the bank."

In this respect, as in others, we see the connection of lyric song with the songs of the people out of which it originated—a connection which again may be illustrated by a modern instance, for in several of Burns' lyrics one verse is traditional, while the remainder is the work of Burns in the spirit of the original.

Of the elements out of which melic originated, the hymns, the dirges, the wedding-songs, of which we get some glimpses in Homer, the litanies, so to speak, of which we get some notion by a comparison of the Saliaric hymns at Rome, and the songs of the people, of which a few fragments, of various dates, have survived—we have said something already in treating of the origin of lyric poetry in general. The history of melic begins for us with Terpander, and, so far as we shall treat of it, that is, in the creative period of Greek literature, it falls into four periods. The first period, which began with Terpander and lasted for about a century, may be called the Spartan period, for it was in Sparta that during this time melic was pre-eminently cultivated. This period was marked by the musical reforms of Terpander, the innovations of Clonas and Thaletas and the genius of Alcman. In the second period the scene shifts from Sparta to Lesbos and to Sicily; and to the change in area there corresponds a difference in the character of melic, for it was in Lesbos and in Sicily that the songs of the people were developed into lyric song; and with this branch of lyric poetry the great names of Alcæus and Sappho are associated. In this period also flourished Stesichorus, who, in the quality of his genius and the nature of his art, was the forerunner of Simonides and Pindar. In the third period we leave the homes

of the people for the courts of tyrants, and return from song to chorus. This was the period of Simonides and of Anacreon, though not of the works which commonly pass under the name of Anacreon. The fourth was again a period of choral lyric, but it had ceased to be local, and in the hands of Pindar and Bacchylides became universal. In this period, too, the dithyramb reached its greatest importance.

The part which Sparta during the first period played in the development of melic is remarkable and instructive. It is remarkable because, although it was in Sparta that melic grew, scarcely any of the melic poets were Spartans. It is instructive because it shows both how important is the function of the public in the history of art, and how dependent the growth of poetry, and of literature generally, is on non-poetical and non-literary conditions. If Sparta was the home and not the mother of lyric poets at this time—if she produced no genius, but supplied the conditions necessary for its growth, it was because there existed in Sparta a sympathetic public, which by its education was capable of furnishing the ready and appreciative welcome which is the best atmosphere for the growth of art, and the best stimulus on the artist to excel himself. In the next place, it is no casual coincidence that the time when the greatest poets of the age invariably found their way to Sparta, as did Terpander from Lesbos, Clonas from Thebes, and Thaletas from Crete, was precisely the time when, in power and reputation, Sparta was the foremost state, without a rival in Greece. Doubtless each poet had an appreciative public in his native city, but the greatness of Sparta offered him the same superior field for achieving fame as that Athens gave later, and as at the present day Paris and London present to the provincials of France and England.

With the musical reforms of Terpander—the extension of the tetrachord of the cithara into an incomplete octave[1]—we shall not deal. We have to speak of him as a poet. Unfortunately, the few and insignificant fragments which we possess of his poetry afford us no means whatever of estimating his quality as a poet or his method. His place in the history of lyric poetry has to be inferred mainly from the not always satisfactory account given of him by Proclus. The species of religious lyric to which Terpander's compositions belonged was the nome. Of the meaning of this word no more satisfactory

[1] These reforms of Terpander constitute what was technically called ἡ πρώτη κατάστασις τῶν περὶ τὴν μουσικήν. The δευτέρα κατάστασις τῶν π. τ. μ. was the work of Thaletas of Crete and his school.



account can be given than that it is the Greek word *nomos*, which means "law," and that this kind of poetry was called Nomos because, as opposed to other kinds of which the shape was determined by the poet, it was subject to certain definite laws. Thus before Terpander the nome was regularly composed of four parts, and the law of its composition was that the main body of the hymn should be preceded by an introduction, which must consist of two parts, and should be followed by a conclusion. Terpander developed this division of the nome, and divided the conclusion and the two introductory parts again into each two subdivisions, thus making the nome to consist of seven parts.[1] So much for the form of the nome; we have next to speak of its character, contents, and the way in which it was executed. In character it was religious, and thus resembled hymns and pæans; but in its contents it differed from the pæan, because it was not sung solely in honour of Apollo, but might be dedicated to any of the gods, and originally was used in the worship of the nether gods as well as of Apollo. In content it further differed from the pæan, because the pæan was the form in which either thanksgivings for victory were offered to Apollo or prayers were made to him to avert pestilence. while the nome rather celebrated the attributes, the might, and the majesty of the god whom it honoured. In the way in which it was executed it differed from all other religious lyrics, because it was not accompanied by dancing, and because it was not choral, but was sung as a solo; and from this difference flows another mark which distinguishes the nome from other religious lyrics, viz., that it was not written in strophes. Further, until the time of Clonas, the musical instrument which accompanied the nome was the cithara.

According to the records kept at Delphi, Terpander won the prize with his nomes in one of the musical contests there. This would seem to point to the cultivation at Delphi of such religious lyric as existed at the time, and in this, as Terpander did not invent but developed the nome and gave it a place in literature, there is nothing improbable. But the records, when relating to events of such great antiquity, are reasonably open

[1] The names of the four original divisions were: *ἀρχά*, *κατατροπά*, *ὀμφαλός* and *σφραγίς*; of Terpander's seven divisions: *ἀρχά*. *μεταρχά*, *κατατροπά*, *μετακατατροπά*, *ὀμφαλός*, *σφραγίς*, *ἐπίλογος*. The main body of the hymn was, as the word implies, the *ὀμφαλός*. The *σφραγίς* was the "seal" which stamped the conclusion. To the "seal" Terpander added the epilogue; to the *ἀρχά* the *μεταρχά*, and to the *κατατροπά* the *μετακατατροπά*. See Pollux, iv. 66.

to doubt. From Delphi Terpander is said to have been sent by the oracle to Sparta. There he instituted the celebrated festival of the Carnea in honour of Apollo, and in the musical contests which were held regularly ever afterwards at the festival, the prize was for long carried off by the school of Terpander, the most famous member of which was Kapion.[1]

The innovation which Clonas of Thebes made in melic was to compose nomes designed, not for a cithara, but a flute accompaniment. In this he was followed by Polymnestus of Colophon, and Sakadas of Argos, and Echembrotus of Arcadia. As we possess not even a fragment by any one of these composers of nomes (except a dedication on an offering by Echembrotus), we need not say more of them.

The development of the pæan is ascribed to Thaletas of Crete. Of his works we possess no fragment, and know nothing; but he seems to have exercised a decisive influence on the course of melic, for, after his time nomes gave way to the pæan, solo to chorus, and the cithara to the flute. It is interesting to note, too, that his connection with Sparta was set down to the action of the oracle of Delphi, as was also that of Terpander and of Tyrtæus. Whatever may be the historical value of the incidents with which this connection is clothed in the case of these three important early lyric poets, the fact that they were said to have been sent by the oracle to Sparta shows the closeness of the relations between Delphi and Sparta, and that lyric poetry was associated with Delphi. The new path marked out for melic by Thaletas was followed by Xenodamos, who brought from Crete the hyporcheme, a species of melic in which the mimetic dancing was the most important element, and by Xenocritus, who took as the subject of his poems the adventures, not of the gods, but of heroes, thus paving the way for the dithyramb.

In Alcman we at last come to a poet of whom, from his fragments, few and mutilated as they are, we can form at least some idea for ourselves. His date is uncertain, and of his life we only know two things—that his poetry was performed and composed by him in Sparta—and that he came from Sardis. Dionysius of Halicarnassus said, indeed, that Alcman was a Spartan by birth; but Stephanus of Byzantium quotes some

[1] One of the eight nomes which Terpander was said to have composed was called Kapion, after this favourite pupil. The others are said to have been called Αἰόλιος and Βοιώτιος, after the musical scales or keys of those names; Ὀρθιος and Τροχαῖος, after the metres, and Ὀξύς, Τερπανδρειος, Τερπάνδρειος, for reasons which cannot be discovered.



verses from Alcman which explicitly state that he came from lofty Sardis. Whether he was a slave, as Suidas, following Crates, affirms, and Dionysius denies, or a freeman; whether he was a Lydian or a Greek, and how he came from Sardis to Sparta, whether as a slave, or as an artist attracted by the chance of fame in Sparta; and at what age, whether as a child or as a man—these are all questions which cannot be satisfactorily settled. It seems improbable that, if he were a slave, he would ever have been permitted to obtain the rights of citizenship in Sparta, and take such an important part in the direction of public worship. About his nationality his name proves little, for though it is Greek, it may not have been his original name; nor do the two alternative names which Suidas gives his father, though both are Greek, prove more; for neither may be genuine. Finally, whether he left Sardis before he was old enough to have been materially influenced by Lydian art, or imported Lydian tendencies into Sparta, is a question to which the fragments we possess are insufficient to give an answer.

Turning from these questions, let us try to see what were his contributions to melic, and why the Alexandrine critics regarded him as a classic, and placed him in their canon of the nine great lyric poets. The direction in which Alcman made his advance, and the nature of his work, were determined by the previous history of melic and the existing conditions in Sparta. That is to say, Alcman found melic exclusively devoted to religious worship in Sparta, and accordingly it was to the lyric of worship that he directed his genius. He found that Thaletas had diverted the current of lyric from nomes in solo to worship in chorus, and he followed out the channel thus opened, composing pæans, hymns, wedding-songs, and prosodia or processional hymns. But his genius was too powerful to be confined to merely working out tendencies which he found already existing. Although he started from and developed the religious and choral elements of lyric, he confined himself to neither. It is the function of lyric to give poetic form to all the emotions, not to that of worship only, and it is the essence of lyric to give more prominence to the subjectivity and the personality of the poet than choral poetry, at any rate in its earlier stages, permitted. As a true lyric poet, then, Alcman felt the need to teach in song other feelings than the religious, and to set forth his own experiences with more directness than the impersonal nature of choral poetry, as it then existed, was compatible with. At the same time these tendencies were conditioned by the character of his public, which, being Spartan,

demanded religious and choral poetry. Alcman had, therefore, to seek for some variety of Dorian melic, which should satisfy Spartan taste and yet admit of being developed into an instrument for conveying his feelings and his own views on life as his own. This he found in the Parthenia, or girls' choruses, which had long existed in Sparta. Such choruses, sung and danced by girls, imply that women were allowed to freely appear in public, and that they received some education in music and dancing. It is, therefore, interesting to note that the history of the condition of Greek women receives some light from the history of these Parthenia. In the oldest times they were probably common to all the Greeks, for dances of this kind are mentioned in Homer and the Homeric hymns.[1] For some time they continued to be usual, not only among the Dorians and Æolians, but also among the Ionians. Eventually, however, the Athenian practice of secluding women, of allowing them to leave the house only for religious worship, and of teaching them nothing but the most elementary household duties, caused the Parthenia to decay among the Athenians. In Sparta, however, where the state took the education of girls into its own hands with as much care as that of boys, and where women occupied a place of some independence by the side of man, the Parthenia long continued to flourish.

Arion is not represented by a single fragment, for the hymn of thanksgiving commemorating his miraculous escape on the back of a dolphin from death at the hands of a treacherous crew, which Ælian (H. A. xii. 45) quotes as the work of Arion, is generally regarded now as the work of a later hand. It is the more to be regretted that we should possess nothing of his, because he not only wrote hexameters (to the number of 2000) and nomes, but first gave a place in literature to the dithyramb, which was the seed out of which the drama was to grow; and the early history of the dithyramb is a matter of some obscurity. The worship of Dionysus was probably of great antiquity in Greece, and may reasonably be supposed to date from before the composition of the Homeric hymn to Dionysus. The power of wine had excited by its mystery the wonder of man in Aryan times, for it is celebrated in the Vedas, where the virtues of *soma* are the marvel of the poet. But as the worship of Dionysus was a different thing from the praise of *soma*, so the dithyramb was not the same thing as the early hymns to

[1] Iliad, xvi. 182; Hymns, xxx. 14. The dance of Artemis and her train, Hymns, xxvii. 15, was probably suggested by the practice of ordinary life, as was also Hymns, v. 5.

Dionysus. The proper, and presumably the original, subject of the dithyramb was the birth of Dionysus, as we learn from Plato (*Laws*, iii. 700), though eventually any portion of his history came to be matter for dithyrambic poets. But it was less in the matter than in the manner of delivery that the dithyramb differed from the hymns. The dithyramb was orgiastic, and this, together with the name (for which no Greek etymology can be found), seems to point to a foreign origin. This view of the nature and origin of the dithyramb is strengthened by the fact that it was in Corinth, which encouraged orgiastic rites and was specially connected with the worship of Cotyto, that the dithyramb first found a home in Greece; and that it was from Methymna in Lesbos, where phallic worship flourished, that Arion brought the dithyramb to Corinth.

The first mention of the dithyramb is in a time before Arion, in a fragment (77B) of Archilochus, who says that he knows how, when he is smitten by wine as by a thunderbolt, to lead off the dithyramb. From this fragment, as well as from the general course of melic poetry, it probably follows that the dithyramb was, until the time of Arion (who was a contemporary of Periander, B.C. 628–585), sung not in chorus, but in monody, as was the case with other melic poetry until Thaletas, and still more effectively Alcman, brought choral poetry into the position of importance which nomes originally occupied. At any rate, the singing of the dithyramb by an organised and trained chorus (as opposed to the extempore singing of a refrain, as in the case of the earliest pæans and wedding-songs), was due to Arion. The position of the chorus in the dithyramb, too, was new, and was due to Arion. Instead of being drawn up in a rectangular body, as was the case with all Dorian choruses, and moving from right to left, and left to right, round the altar, the chorus was arranged in a circle round the altar, and hence was called a Cyclic chorus. Another innovation made by Arion was to dress the chorus as satyrs; the choreutæ, or members of the chorus, thus came to be called in Greek *tragoi*, goats or satyrs, and their song was the goat- or satyr-song, *trag-œdia*. This, and not the offering of a goat as a prize, it is which is the origin of the word "tragedy." The number of choreutæ in Arion's time is not known. The first mention of the number fifty is later, and occurs in a fragment of Simonides (147); whether this was the number of Arion's chorus there is nothing to show. A further innovation ascribed to Arion is, that he gave a "tragic turn"[1] to the

[1] τραγικὸς τρόπος.—Hesychius.

dithyramb, and what this means is uncertain. It has been supposed to mean that Arion did not confine himself to the birth or the adventures of Dionysus for the subject of his dithyrambs, but substituted heroic myths.[1] But probably it refers to the nature of the dancing with which the dithyramb was accompanied. This was more lively and more extravagant than in the case of other choral poetry; it was probably highly mimetic and, as danced by the satyr-clad choreutæ, dramatic.

CHAPTER III.

MELIC POETRY: ALCÆUS AND SAPPHO.

WHILST the Ionians had been developing elegiac and iambic poetry, and whilst in Sparta melic poets, attracted from all parts of the Greek world, had carried nomes as far as the simple nature of such poetry permitted, and then had begun to lay the foundations of choral poetry, in Lesbos the other division of melic poetry, which consisted of odes, individual and subjective in character, and which corresponded rather to what we understand at the present day by lyric poetry, was being quietly but steadily developed. Of the stages between the songs of the people in Lesbos and the poetry of Alcæus absolutely no trace has come down to us; we have neither a word nor the name of a single poet. It is indeed only inference, but it is a necessary inference from the developed character of Alcæus' rhythm, that such stages occurred.

At the beginning of the sixth century B.C., in the time of Alcæus, who was a contemporary of Solon, Lesbos was in a state of political convulsion, the shocks of which threw down one form of government after another, oligarchical, tyrannic, and democratic, until the wisdom and power of Pittacus, the Solon of Lesbos, secured peace for his country. In these revolutions and counter-revolutions Alcæus took an eager part. Born of a noble family, and reared in the political faith of his fathers, Alcæus was by nature and by education an ardent partisan of the oligarchy, which in his earlier years ruled without fear or check in Lesbos. But the good time of oligarchy was drawing to an end, and that in Lesbos was exploded in the usual way—from within. Finding the position which he shared in common

[1] A change of this kind was suppressed at Sicyon by Cleisthenes. Hdt. v. 67.



with his fellow-oligarchs not of sufficient freedom, Melanchrus contrived to constitute himself tyrant; and this proceeding led to a complication of revolutions, tyrannicides, exiles, imprisonments, usurpations, conspiracies, and insurrections, which at this distance of time it is almost impossible to disentangle. Melanchrus was eventually assassinated, but the oligarchy was not to be restored. In the division, however, between the oligarchs and the people, who had united to overthrow the tyranny, but split on the question of oligarchy or democracy, another oligarch, Myrsilus, throwing over his own party, forced his way to the tyranny. Probably at this time Alcæus and his brothers were driven into exile; and we may perhaps measure the force of this political eruption by the distance to which, and the divers directions in which, these exiles were ejected; for Alcæus landed in Egypt, and took service under the Pharaoh Hofra, while his brother Antimenidas was projected east, and entered the army of Nebuchadnezzar. Myrsilus shared the fate of Melanchrus, and was assassinated, and after this a popular government was established by Pittacus. But Alcæus was impartially opposed both to the usurpations of tyrants and the people's encroachments on the rights of the oligarchs, and he made war both with his sword and his verse on Pittacus and the popular government. The insurrection failed, however, and Alcæus was thrown into prison. There he implored for release from Pittacus, whom he had despised and abused. Pittacus released him with the comment, "To forgive is better than to take vengeance." After this we know nothing more of Alcæus' history.

Alcæus' compositions made at least ten books, and included hymns to the gods, as well as the odes for which he was more famous. The latter are sometimes divided into political (*stasiotika*), drinking (*skolia*), and love (*erotika*) songs; but it is hard to observe this division of classes, for the wine seems to have got into all of them, and they were probably all delivered in the same way, to the same audience, and on the same sort of occasion. That is to say, they were probably sung by Alcæus, to his own accompaniment, over the wine to his political and personal friends. Hence his songs, when they are something more than drinking-songs, would still naturally contain allusions to wine, and even those which began as drinking-songs might, without any inconsequence, turn to love or politics. The fragments of his works are disappointing reading, and this is not because time has, so far as we can judge, treated Alcæus more hardly than other lyric poets of the same or greater antiquity. Relatively, indeed, to the elegiac poets, Alcæus is not fortunate in

the size of the fragments from which we have to form our opinion of him, and we can assign a natural reason for this: the lines of cleavage are not the same in elegiac poetry as in odes of a more complex metrical formation. A large proportion of the fragments of Alcæus have reached us embedded in the works of grammarians, who quote Alcæus only to illustrate a metrical point or a peculiarity of dialect; and such quotations, usually short, never necessarily contain a complete thought. Quotations from the elegiac poets, on the other hand, are made not for such purposes, but usually for the sake of the thought contained in them. Hence we have complete elegies by Solon, Tyrtæus, or Mimnermus, but only fragments of Alcæus. Still, compared with Archilochus or Alcman, Alcæus is well represented; but whereas in the little that survives of Alcman there are to be found two fragments which at once put him at least on a level with his reputation, in the more extensive fragments of Alcæus there is nothing which is worthy of the great name that Alcæus enjoys.

The fragments of his hymns to the gods contain nothing which is above poetical commonplace; and probably the hymns in their entirety were of no great merit, for Alcæus was not by inclination likely to excel in, nor was he in after-time famous for, religious and choral lyric. It is his political and martial verse which antiquity is unanimous in extolling as constituting his greatness as a lyric poet. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2. 8), Athenæus (xiv. 627A), Quintilian (10. 1. 63), and the epigrammatists in the Greek Anthology, all select his stasiotika as his distinctive excellence. We turn, therefore, with interest to the fragments of these odes, and find that fortunately among them are some of the most considerable and famous of his fragments. For instance, we have the original of Horace's "O navis! referent in mare te" (C. i. 14), in which, under the metaphor of a ship, the distress of the state is pictured (18). We have, again, the original of Horace's "Nunc est bibendum," with the rejoicing over the murder of Myrsilus (20). And, as the expression of Alcæus' martial spirit, we have a description (15) of his room decorated with helmets and greaves and bucklers, and all the appurtenances of war; and also (33) his welcome to his brother, who had returned from his service under Nebuchadnezzar with a beautiful ivory-hilted sword, which he had taken from a giant whom he had slain in fair and open fight.

All these fragments are good, and they confirm what Dionysius and Quintilian say, that he is not diffuse, and that his style possesses grandeur; but they do not reach the level of



the highest poetry. The finest is the metaphor of the ship, with the waves rising against it on all sides, and its sails in rags. Compared with the diligent but lifeless work of Horace's imitation, the Greek has the merit of being sketched after nature; but if we wish to see the difference between this and the best poetry, "to know the change and feel it," we have only to compare the lines in which Homer[1] describes, not a storm—Alcæus' stanzas are not very stormy; he has to tell us that the weather is bad—but the motion of a ship. Setting aside other differences, in the one case we feel that we are on the ship, and in the other we do not. In the description of his room, too, we are sensible of a somewhat similar deficiency; but in this case the deficiency is in the spirit, not in the reality of the description. As a picture of an artistic interior. it would rank in literary merit with similar work in Théophile Gautier or Balzac, and have the advantage of brevity. When, however, Athenæus (*l. c.*) asks us to admire in this the martial spirit of a man who was more than warlike enough, our attention is at once drawn to the difference in spirit between these verses, in which weapons play the part of æsthetic mural decorations, and those in which Tyrtæus describes the Spartan warrior, with teeth set, feet firmly planted on the ground, covered by his shield, holding his burly lance in his hand, learning in battle how to fight.

Thus, then, not only do the fragments which we happen to possess fail to bear out the high opinion which the ancients held of the stasiotika, but one of them is actually a passage which Athenæus quotes to prove his opinion. If Athenæus has thus misjudged the merit of Alcæus, it becomes worth while to examine the criticisms of Dionysius and Quintilian more closely, and with some independence of judgment. What Dionysius singles out as above all excellent in Alcæus is the *êthos* of the political odes; and Quintilian explains this for us when he praises Alcæus for attacking tyrants. This, then, was the *êthos* of the political odes—hatred to tyrants. And this was Alcæus' distinctive excellence. Liberty is a subject which may inspire the highest poetry, as it does in the lines—

> "Two voices are there: one is of the sea,
> One of the mountains; each a mighty voice:
> In both from age to age thou didst rejoice;
> They were thy chosen music—Liberty!"

But it must be liberty which fills the poet; and when we set

[1] Odyss. ii. *ad fin.*

Alcæus, with his "Now must we soak! now must a man perforce be made to drink, since Myrsilus is dead," by the side of Wordsworth's "There came a tyrant, and . . . thou fought'st against him." we not only see that the stasiotika failed of the highest excellence as poetry, but we also feel that hatred of tyrants is not, as Dionysius and Quintilian seemed to think, the same thing as love of liberty. Alcæus fought against the tyranny of one, but for the tyranny of the few.

Leaving the fragments of the political odes, we find among the drinking-songs, or skolia, two pieces of much greater beauty, which seem to show that Dionysius and Quintilian ranked the stasiotika above all the rest of Alcæus, not because of their poetical, but their political merit, in the same way as Alcæus' popularity at Athens, which is testified to by Aristophanes, seems to have attached itself to the political odes (for it is a stasiotikon which he quotes in the *Wasps*, 1234), and to have been due to the tyranno-phobia from which the democracy, according to Aristophanes, suffered.[1] The two fragments which give us a higher opinion of Alcæus than anything in the political odes are a winter-piece (34) and a summer-piece (39). The former is the original of Horace's "Vides ut alta stet nive candidum" (C. i. 9), and is a picture of the time "when icicles hang by the wall," and "all around the wind doth blow." The latter was written—

> "While that the sun, with his beams hot,
> Scorchèd the fruits in vale and mountain."

But when we have felt the beauty of these two fragments, and recognise the brevity and the grandeur of the style, we are conscious of the same deficiency as in the other fragments. Although he has a sympathy with and a love for nature, the poet is not absorbed in his subject; as, for instance, Alcman in his description of a sleeping landscape: he is thinking of something else—wine and women. In Shakespeare, "When icicles hang by the wall," and "When all around the wind doth blow," "Then nightly sings the staring owl." But in Alcæus, when the storm blows and the rivers freeze, or when the fruits are scorched and the grasshopper sings, then Alcæus says, "Let us drink." It is perhaps, however, unfair to contrast Alcæus with Shakespeare or any modern lyric poet, for this reason, that the

[1] It is significant that, as soon as tyranno-phobia, both in the Athenians and in critics, dies out, a proper appreciation of Alcæus' merit as a poet begins to emerge. It is Himerius who reveals to us the existence of an appreciation of Alcæus' sympathy with nature, when he says of some ode that the birds sing in it as you would expect birds to sing in Alcæus.



Greeks did not make the sharp severance between man and nature that we do in modern times. The Greeks were from two to three thousand years nearer than we to the time of those primitive stories in which the hero is addressed by and talks to a snake or a bird or a stream or a rock as familiarly as to any other of his acquaintances. In Greek literature, too, the relations of man and nature are the same: nature is always conceived of as sympathising with the sufferings of man or ministering to his joys. Nature was still the mother of the Greek, and he was old enough to sympathise with her, and to go to her to be comforted and consoled, but not old enough or self-conscious enough to know as well as feel that he loved her. A Greek might perhaps have felt, but could not have said, with Shelley—

> "I love snow and all the forms
> Of the radiant frost;
> I love waves, and winds, and storms,
> Everything almost
> Which is Nature's, and may be
> Untainted by man's misery."

Still further was the Greek from discovering that nature is indifferent to man, with an indifference which Burns has given expression to—

> "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
> How can ye bloom sae fresh an' fair!
> How can ye chant, ye little birds,
> And I sae weary, fu' o' care!"

It was, then, characteristic of Greek lyric, and not a peculiar deficiency in Alcæus, that he could only treat nature as a background to man, could not work with his eye solely on nature to the exclusion of man, as Shelley did in his two verses beginning, "A widow bird sate mourning for her love." But within the limits between which Greek thought moved, Alcæus does not in his pictures of nature attain the excellence of Alcman, or of Æschylus in the *Prometheus Bound*, or Sophocles in the *Ajax*.

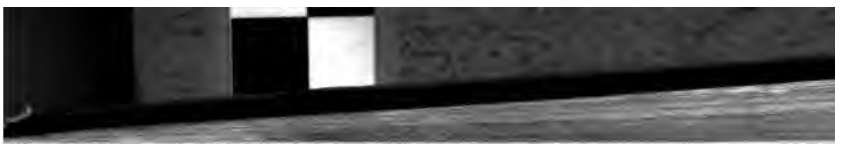
Of the love-songs of Alcæus nothing remains but fragments, which give us no idea of their worth; and the names of the objects of his affection, *e.g.*, Lycus, show that these odes would not have been acceptable to modern ears. Having considered the hymns, the stasiotika, the skolia, and the erotika of Alcæus, we have now to estimate his work as a whole. To begin with his rhythms, not only was the logaœdic verse which bears his name his invention, and still, by the name Alcaic, testifies to his excellence in this form of strophe, but sapphics also were

the product of his genius. The fragment which describes his room is in a metre peculiar to Alcæus, and he tried many other experiments in the combination of metres. In the next place, the qualities of his style are, as Dionysius said, and as even we at the present day can to some extent see, brevity and magnificence. His matter—except in the hymns, which are not characteristic—is personal, and, like his metre and his style, genuinely lyric. Occurring in the period of growth and creation in the history of Greek literature, he is original in his matter as in his metres; and this gives to his work the note of reality which we miss in Horace. When Alcæus shows us the ship of state in distress, he, at least, pictures himself as on board; but to the Roman ship of state Horace in his ode stands in the attitude of an apostrophising spectator on shore. The difference between an original and an adaptation comes out even more strongly in the ode, which in Alcæus celebrates the assassination of Myrsilus, and in Horace is adapted to the suicide of Cleopatra. Alcæus had indeed suffered at the hands of Myrsilus, had been perhaps exiled by him, certainly deprived of his oligarchical privileges. He, therefore, when Myrsilus was killed, could sing, "Now must we drink," and mean it. But Cleopatra's existence had not been, as Horace would imply, a crushing weight which scarcely permitted him or any other Roman to breathe while it lasted. When, therefore, Horace—whose digestion was a source of anxiety to him—says, "Now must we drink," it is because the word of command has been uttered by Augustus.

In the choice of his subjects Alcæus is limited. He found his main inspiration in good wine and inferior politics. But if his range is narrow, within its limits he shows considerable variety of treatment. Athenæus remarked that there was no circumstance or occasion which Alcæus could not convert into an excuse for drinking; and summer and winter, joy and sorrow, love and politics, do all lead to the bowl with him. But this fact should not be interpreted to mean that he was solely devoted to the worship of wine. Unfortunately this was not the case, or his drinking-songs would have been better. He never wrote anything so thorough as the lines in the *Cyclops* of Euripides—

> "I would give
> All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains
> And pitch into the brine off some white cliff,
> Having got once well drunk and cleared my brows.
> How mad is he whom drinking makes not glad!"[1]

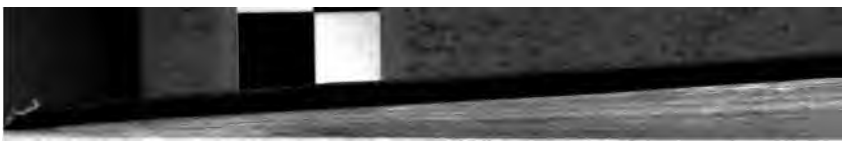
[1] Shelley's translation (with Swinburne's additions).



The wine, and that which Alcæus mixes with it, both suffer in the mixing. The explanation of all things ending in wine with Alcæus is, as we have already said, the occasion and the audience to which he addressed himself. But if his treatment of his themes is varied, it is not profound; he does not compensate for the narrowness of his range by intensity of feeling. Herein he differs from Archilochus, with whom he has externally points of resemblance. Both lived in unquiet times, both wandered far, and both spent much time in camp. Neither was troubled by the deeper problems of life, and neither found a better remedy or a better moral for suffering than "Let us drink." But here the resemblance ceases. When Archilochus used his iambics as weapons, he struck home. Alcæus only abused Pittacus; and his verses on the death of Myrsilus, which are flown with wine and insolence, are marked by the impetuosity of youth, not by the strength of genius.

Contemporary with Alcæus, and a native of Lesbos, was Sappho, or, as the name is written in her own dialect, Psappha. Of her life we know remarkably little. Herodotus (2. 135) tells us that her father's name was Skamandronymos, and that her brother Charaxus wasted his money on the famous courtesan Rhodopis (or Doricha), whom he brought home with him from Egypt, for which Sappho ridiculed him much. From the *Parian Marble* (36) we learn that she went into exile to Sicily along with the other aristocrats of Lesbos, but as the inscription is much obliterated here, the date is matter of conjecture. From Aristotle (*Rhet.* i. 9), we learn that Alcæus addressed an ode (55) to Sappho, to the effect that he had something which he wished to say, but shame prevented him; and that Sappho replied with an ode (28) saying that had his wish been for anything good and honourable, shame would not have prevented him from speaking. If to this scanty information about the life of Sappho we add the tradition, on which antiquity is agreed, and which the fragments of her works confirm, that, in accordance with a practice not infrequent among the Æolians and the Dorians, she collected round her a number of younger women, in much the same way as younger men collected round Socrates, then we shall have before us all that is known about the life of Sappho. Other and probably erroneous statements owe their existence to misunderstandings and uncertain inferences from her works and mode of life. Thus, because one fragment (85) says, "I have a fair daughter, like a golden blossom, my beloved Kleïs, whom I would not part with for all Lydia," it has been inferred that Sappho was married and had a

child, Kleïs; which is as though we were to infer from a fragment of Campbell that the poet was "the chief of Ulva's isle" and married "Lord Ullin's daughter." It is probable that the story of her hopeless love for Phaon had its origin in a similar misunderstanding of some of Sappho's verses; but it was the existence of her school, following, "fringe,' coterie, or club—none of the words will convey at once the idea both of the literary and artistic objects of these meetings and the personal affection which was the indispensable basis of the connection between the teacher and the pupil—that afforded an application for the meaning of her verses, and gave to the coarsest imaginings of exhausted lasciviousness an opportunity and an appetite for stripping Passion of her poetry and violating her in the name of history. The process of outrage was begun by the comedians of Athens, and is carried on, openly and secretly, in the literature of to-day by writers whose knowledge of literature is profound enough only to enable them to misspell the name of Sappho. The amount of freedom which the Æolians and Dorians allowed their women was unintelligible to the Athenians, or at least to the Athenians of a later time than this, the beginning of the sixth century B.C.; and though the Æolians or Dorians might think that such meetings as those of Sappho and her followers were for literature or art, the Athenians—especially those who were separated by two centuries from the facts which they undertook to explain—possessed much more discernment. Ameipsias, and then comedian after comedian, throughout the old, the middle, and the new comedy, took Sappho as the subject and the name of works, of whose refinement the *Lysistrata*, the *Thesmophoriazusæ*, and the *Ecclesiazusæ* of Aristophanes may give us some faint idea. Then ancient historians of literature, *e.g.* Chameleon, in their search for materials for a biography of Sappho, seized on these comedies as trustworthy sources of information—thus proving, for instance, that among Sappho's lovers were Archilochus (who lived a century earlier), or Anacreon (who lived about as much later)—and thereby left future workers in the same field only their imagination to draw on for their facts. But so alarmingly luxuriant did this prove, that even the name of Sappho, by-word of shame as it had become, was not regarded as capable of bearing all that was thus put upon it, and relief was afforded whence the burden came; for a new and wholly imaginary Sappho was invented, who walks the pages of lexicographers like Suidas with the honour in dishonour of the name she bears.



But none of these mephitic exhalations from the bogs of perverted imaginings availed to dim the glorious light of Sappho's poetry; for ancient critics, at least, seem to have judged a work of art by the standard of art, and not by referring to the morality of the artist. Many, indeed, of the expressions of amazement at Sappho's work which are to be found in Greek writers are open to some suspicion, as being based on not wholly satisfactory grounds. When Strabo (xiii. 617) calls Sappho "a marvellous phenomenon," he seems to do so because no other woman could approach her in merit; and the same inadequate standard seems to be implied in the expressions "a Homer among women," "a tenth Muse," "a Pierian bee," and so on, which are frequently applied to her in Greek writers. If this were all that could be said of Sappho, that no other woman who wrote in Greek could rival her, her rank would not be high, for although a considerable number of women in Greece did write, they did not attain great excellence. It is a better testimony both to the criticism of ancient critics and to the value of Sappho that she was ranked among the nine great lyric poets by the Alexandrine school. But even this does not convey the full tribute to "that ineffable glory and grace as of present godhead, that subtle breath and bloom of very heaven itself, that dignity of divinity which informs the most passionate and piteous notes of the unapproachable poetess with such grandeur as would seem impossible to such passion."[1] "The highest lyric work is either passionate or imaginative," Mr. Swinburne has said;[2] and as Coleridge is the greatest representative among lyric poets of imaginative poetry, so Sappho's poetry stands highest in the passionate lyric of all times and ages. Her work has no more variety than Coleridge's, and suffers no more for want of it. But though it is one, it is not the same, as the sea is one but not the same. In one as in the other, the languid voluptuous swell, which reflects now the sun, now the midnight moon (52), and the stars which by the moon "pale their ineffectual fires" (3), is ruffled into darkness by the winds, or flashes with "the lightning of the noontide ocean." It is to the sea rather than to fire that Sappho should be likened; for although her verses are indeed, as ancient critics remarked, mixed with fire, and her passion blazes out now here, now there, and glows always, her verses and her passion are oceanic in their depth and tidal in their strength. Above all, the ocean has a voice—

[1] Swinburne, *Essays and Studies*, p. 92.
[2] Ib. 275.

"And a tone
Arises from its measured motion—
How sweet!"

Some of the fragments which we possess (*e.g.* 95 and 109) have been preserved expressly because of the beauty of their sound, and in all we hear "the echo of that unimaginable song, with its pauses and redoubled notes, and returns and falls of sound, as of honey dropping from heaven—as of tears and fire and seed of life—which, but though run over and repeated in thought, pervades the spirit with 'a sweet possessive pang.'"[1] Her grasp of the mechanism of verse, which is implied in this command of melody, was greater, as is the number (15) of her metres, even in the fragments we have, than any other lyric poet possessed.

Amongst the remains of Sappho's poetry are one complete ode to Aphrodite (1) and a considerable fragment—four stanzas—of another ode (2), imitated by Catullus (51). The passion of these odes is such as elsewhere is portrayed as only existing between a lover and his mistress; but in these odes the object of Sappho's passion is a woman, and the fragments of the rest of the odes (as opposed to the epithalamia and hymns) resemble these. This has driven many respectable commentators into taking refuge in a various reading, thereby making the first ode applicable (as they vainly imagine) to a man. The second ode cannot be thus remedied; and commentators back abashed into a cloud of words—all true—about climate, social conditions, the difference between the modern and the Greek view of friendship, &c. First, however, the mystery of Sappho's passion cannot be dispersed, or be anything but aggravated, by various readings: next, it is not scientific demonstration which can make any man feel what is the real beauty of a thing; and to set down to the heat of the climate or the conditions of life in Lesbos that passion which gives to Sappho's music "a value beyond thought and beyond price," is to do a very poor service to her poetry for the sake of arming her reputation with a treacherous and superfluous weapon. But this error, radical as it is, will do Sappho but little harm, for, as a critical estimate, it lacks even that grain of truth without which no error can exist. More serious is the mistaken view of Sappho's quality as a poetess which is conveyed in Horace's phrase "mascula Sappho;"—more serious because there is enough truth here to make the error current. It is perfectly true that the language of Sappho is that of a lover to his mistress: whoever can read

[1] Swinburne, p. 92.



Sappho can see that. It is the most obvious and the most superficial trait in her work. To take this characteristic, and offer it to the world as the sum of Sappho's poetry, as though it were the inversion and not the intensity of passion which we are to admire, is a shallow misconception which serves to mark the standard of taste for lyric poetry in Rome in Horace's day. To discover the sex of Sappho's poetry and passion was reserved for Rome and for the curious in such matters. The author of the treatise on the Sublime, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, critics from whom we can learn how to understand the beauty of Greek literature, were not thus misled, but, with unerring instinct, at once seized on the perfection in delineation and colouring, and on the marvellous fidelity in her representation of the passion of love. The former critic says (10), "The feelings which result from the madness of love Sappho always draws after their symptoms and from reality itself. And wherein does she show her excellence? In that she is marvellous in selecting and combining the extremest and most violent of them." He then quotes the second of our fragments, and goes on to say, "Are you not amazed how she beats and drives into it soul, body, hearing, speech, sight, complexion, all things which are regarded as disconnected with each other; and how at one and the same moment she is both frozen with chill and consumed by fire, distraught of reason and perfectly logical, alarmed with fear and all but dead—all that her feeling may seem to be, not a single thing but, a *mêlée* of passions?"

Athenæus (XV. 687A) calls Sappho a thorough woman, although a poetess, and this is a view which has been adopted by some modern critics. But although she expresses all a woman's contempt for a rival who cannot hold her dress properly (70), and says (68) to another, "When you die, no one will remember *you*, for you have no share in the roses of Pieria;" still it is not these fragments by which Sappho rises to the pre-eminence which she enjoys. Her love of flowers, however, of the rose, for which, says Philostratus (Ep. 71), she always has some new chaplet of praise; her tender sympathy for the hyacinth which is crushed under the feet of the shepherds on the mountains and stains purple the ground (94), for the tender flower of the grass which is trodden down by the dancers (54); her joy in "the sweet-voiced harbinger of spring, the nightingale" (39); her pity for the doves which are shot by men, "and their life becomes cold and their wings fall" (16): all these are emotions which are more common in women than in men, but in poetry

are not peculiar to or distinctive of poetesses. Wordsworth's heart

"with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils."

Shelley loves

"The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,"

or

"a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves;"

and Keats

"The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,"

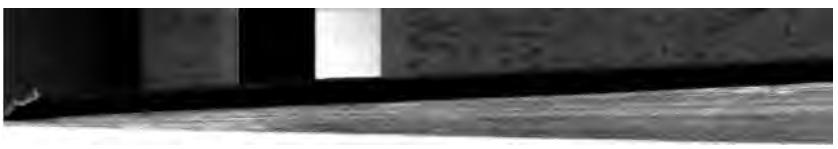
and "all little birds that are" fill English lyric "with their sweet jargoning."

In point of style, Dionysius (*de Comp. Verb.* 23) takes Sapphe as the greatest lyric representative of smoothness and polish of style, and in illustration of his meaning he quotes the ode which now stands first in Bergk's collection. He goes on to say that the grace and beauty of this style consists in the flow of its melody. To express the quality of Sappho's verse we must borrow a comparison from Sappho herself; it is "more delicate than water" (122). It makes a pleasant noise—

"A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune."

Dionysius also says that it is flower-like; not that beauties are woven into her style, as Demetrius (*de Eloc.* 166) says, but her verse is itself (again we must borrow from Sappho herself) "more delicate than the rose" (123). For examples of her "redoubled notes and returns and falls" of song we thank Demetrius, although he does present them to us with the labels "anaphora," "anadiplosis," attached (ib. 141); but most grateful are we to a scholiast (Hermog. vii. 983) who has preserved us three lines "more precious than gold" (123), in which Sappho likens an unmarried girl to an apple which reddens "atop of the topmost twig," and the apple-gatherers have forgotten it—no! not forgotten it; they were not able to reach it.

Astronomers have calculated the law of the distance which separates the planets from each other, and have discovered thereby that in one region where, according to this law, there should be a planet, there is no planet, but asteroids. These are the fragments of what once was a planet. Of Sappho's poetry we have only fragments, but they, like the asteroids, show where a planet was once.

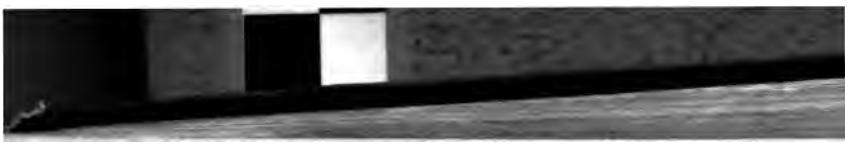


Amongst the school of Sappho are usually placed Damophila and Erinna. No fragment by the former has come down to us, and with regard to her life we know nothing. About the latter more information is forthcoming, but on every matter concerned with her either our authorities are in hopeless conflict or grave doubts have been raised in modern times. Tenos, Telos, Rhodes, and Lesbos have been assigned as her birthplace, but the fact that the epigrams which go by her name are written in Dorian has inclined most modern critics to regard Telos as the place of her birth. Still greater are the discrepancies with regard to her date. On the one hand, she is made to be a contemporary of Sappho, and a doubtful reading in one of Sappho's fragments (77) may conceal her name. On the other hand, Eusebius gives as her date B.C. 352, a difference of two centuries or more. This uncertainty as to her date makes it difficult to decide whether the story of her untimely death at the age of nineteen is probably based on good authority, or is a misinterpretation of something in her own writings. She is said to have written a poem of 300 hexameters, which was entitled the *Distaff*. Of this we have three insignificant fragments (one of doubtful authenticity), which reveal nothing as to the nature of the poem, and we have no other information on the subject. It has been conjectured that it resembled the idyll of Theocritus (28), which bears the same name. Some admirer of her poetry in antiquity compared her to Homer; but if this were not an exaggeration, we should probably have had more frequent mention of her, and more frequent quotations. The three epigrams which go by her name in the Anthology do not show any genius.

While the ode and personal lyric were being wrought to their greatest perfection in Lesbos, in Sicily the other branch of melic, choral poetry, was being developed by Stesichorus. The importance which was attached to his services to choral music is indicated by the name "Stesichorus," which means "founder of chorus," and superseded entirely the original name of the poet, which was Teisias. The place of his birth is uncertain; it is sometimes said to have been Matauros, sometimes Himera, and modern writers usually combine these two traditions by saying that he was born at Himera, but belonged by extraction to Matauros. If his date were fixed, it might help to settle the question, for he may have been born before the foundation of Himera; but the time is even more uncertain than the place of his birth, and all we can say is, that, roughly, he belongs to the first half of the sixth century B.C. About his life we know absolutely nothing, for the story told by Plato (*Ph.* 243) that

he was smitten with blindness by Helena because he had in a poem declared her to be the source of Troy's woes, cannot be made to yield any residuum of fact. Probably he did make some such statement in some poem, and he certainly in another poem, from which Plato quotes, declared that the story about Helen was untrue; that she never crossed the sea to Troy (32). The contradictory nature of these two statements may have led to the second being regarded as a recantation, for Plato terms it "the so-called palinode." The next step would be to speculate on the poet's reason for recanting, and thus the story of his blindness would arise. The mode of expression which Plato uses, "the so-called palinode," suggests that the poem was not really a palinode or recantation, and the lines which he quotes rather imply that the story which Stesichorus was denying was one told by others, not one of his own telling which he was recanting. However, although the so-called palinode cannot be made to yield any information as to the life of Stesichorus, it has a value in the history of literature; for in it the story which Euripides took for the plot of his *Helena*, and which was known to Herodotus, that Helena stayed in Egypt and her phantom went to Troy with Paris, made, so far as we know, its first appearance in literature. In connection with the life of Stesichorus another story is told, that he warned his fellow-citizens against the designs of a certain tyrant by the fable of the horse which, for the purposes of vengeance, obtained the assistance of man, and found that he had to pay for his vengeance by the loss of his liberty. The warning was disregarded, the tyrant was successful, and Stesichorus had to fly to Catana, where he is said to have died. The uncertainty as to Stesichorus' date makes it uncertain who the tyrant was, whether Gelon or Phalaris, but we are most likely to be safe if we cling to the authority of Aristotle (*Rhet.* 2. 20), who says it was Phalaris of Acragas. This story too has its interest in the history of literature, for it is one of the subjects treated of in the famous letters of Phalaris.

Although Stesichorus was later in date than Alcman, he is in no other sense his successor. Stesichorus did not take up choral lyric where Alcman left it, but made a fresh departure. Alcman had imported the subjective and personal element into choral poetry, and had thereby helped to purify it of the narrative character which is alien to lyric, and into which poetry celebrating the deeds of the gods was peculiarly apt to fall. Stesichorus was not affected by the advance thus made by Alcman; he started from and belonged to an earlier stage in the history



of choral lyric, although in time he was later than Alcman. The epic element is even more visible in Stesichorus than the subjective in Alcman, for in the former poet the epic element is not qualified by any other. The poems of Stesichorus are sometimes spoken of as "epic lyric" or "melic epic." They seem to have been long narratives of the exploits of various heroes. Thus the *Geryonis* related the combat of Heracles with the triple-bodied Geryon; the *Cycnus*, Heracles' combat with Cycnus, the son of Ares; the *Cerberus* told how Heracles fetched the dog Cerberus from the nether world; the *Scylla* his adventures with Scylla. The *Oresteia*, as its name implies, was the story of Orestes, and the title of the *Sack of Troy* tells its own subject. These poems or ballads were as purely narrative as epic, but were written in lyric metres, and were sung by a chorus. Thus they were lyrical in form but not in spirit, and yet their spirit, as far as we can judge, was not that of epic; for Stesichorus abandoned the purely objective character of epic poetry without attaining the subjective character of lyric poetry. That is to say, he did not in his narratives confine himself to narrative, but developed the psychological interest, and is thus the forerunner of the earliest Greek novelists. But he was still further removed from the spirit of epic in that he was not inclined to accept and hand on the old tales with implicit belief, but assumed an attitude of criticism—historical and moral—with regard to them, and altered them to suit his own rationalism. It is difficult to see how Stesichorus, being thus out of sympathy with his subject-matter, could have treated it successfully, and Quintilian (10. 1. 62) implies that his treatment was not wholly successful. Quintilian, however, apparently thinks that this was because the subjects handled by Stesichorus were too great to admit of lyrical treatment; but this only shows that Stesichorus had misconceived or failed to realise the proper province of his art. Yet, although Stesichorus was not possessed by the spirit of either epic or lyric, and his "epic lyric" was consequently neither epic nor lyric, he still enjoyed considerable reputation both as a writer and as a pioneer in the field of lyric. How was this?

As Stesichorus' poetry was lyrical only in form, it is to the form of lyric that we must look for the innovations and improvements which he made. The earliest form which melic took in literature was that of nomes, songs of worship and praise delivered as solos. This form of melic was succeeded by choral lyrics, and it was by giving to choral lyric the distinctive form which it ever afterwards bore that Stesichorus acquired

the place which he holds in the history of melic. The fact that the invention of hymns is ascribed to him conceals beneath its surface the real innovation which he introduced. Hymns had existed long before the time of Stesichorus and before the beginning of the history of lyric poetry. They also had existed even in the history of melic before Stesichorus, for the choral odes of Thaletas were hymns. But the division of the hymn into the three parts—strophe, antistrophe, and epode, which corresponded to the movements of the chorus round the altar, was, even if not invented by Stesichorus, but borrowed by him from existing usage in Sicily, at any rate introduced and established in choral melic by him. In this tripartite division of the choral ode Stesichorus left his mark permanently on lyric. In another and minor point he also opened a path which his successors followed: he carried the length of the strophe and antistrophe much farther than had ever been done before, and by thus increasing the length gained additional room for varying and developing the metre.

But in addition to the services he rendered to lyric, Stesichorus has the reputation of being a great writer. On this point we have to rely upon the opinion of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the author of the treatise on the Sublime, and Quintilian. Stesichorus' treatment of the subject-matter, as we have seen, Quintilian defends with little zeal and less discretion; but both he and Dionysius (*Script. Vet. Cens.* 2. 7) say that Stesichorus excelled in character-drawing. There is nothing in the fragments which in the least degree enables us to check or confirm this statement; but this quality is the other and better side of that tendency to psychological analysis which marks Stesichorus as alien to the spirit of epic and allied to romance. In this connection we should mention that, as well as the hero-myths which Stesichorus used in the poems we have already mentioned, the *Geryonis*, *Cerberus*, *Scylla*, *Cycnus*, &c., love-stories and pastoral scenes were taken by him as themes. Thus Stesichorus was the forerunner of bucolic as well as of novel-writers. Whether his erotica and bucolica were of the same form, and were sung chorally as well as his other lyrics, is a point on which no evidence is forthcoming. The poems which celebrated the deeds of Heracles or other heroes would naturally be performed at some festival in honour of the hero; but it is hard to imagine on what occasion such a poem as the *Kalyka*, which told how Kalyka fell in love with Euathlos, and having prayed in vain to Aphrodite that she might marry him, hanged herself, could be sung publicly as a chorus. On the other hand,



to suppose that this and the *Radina* were composed for sole recitation or singing in private has nothing positive in its support. In connection with the subject of Stesichorus' character-drawing, we may note as interesting that Athenæus (xiv. 619d), from whom we get the sketch of the plot of the *Kalyka*, remarks with evident satisfaction that the character of Kalyka, as drawn by Stesichorus, was extremely moral. She desired the love of Euathlos, but only on the condition of becoming his lawful wife.

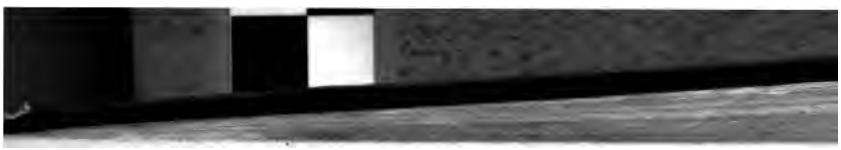
CHAPTER IV.

ELEGIAC AND IAMBIC WRITERS (*continued*).

UNDER the name of Theognis two books of elegiacs have come down to us, of which the first consists of 1230 verses, and the second, which is preserved only in one manuscript—the best, the Mutinensis, A—of 159 verses. These books do not constitute one single poem, but contain a great number of aphorisms, gnomes, reflections, elegies, epigrams, parodies, and amatory verses, arranged on no uniform principle, though at times pieces seem to follow each other because of their resemblance; at others, because of their contrast; and at other times, again, the juxtaposition of the pieces seems to be satirical; while repetitions are not unfrequent, and have given rise to many hypotheses as to the original arrangement of the contents of the books. But although all the manuscripts give the name of Theognis to their contents, these are not all by Theognis, nor was the collection originally intended to be passed off as the work solely of Theognis. It was rather intended as an anthology of the older elegiac writers, and as that part of its contents which is political is violently oligarchical, it was—unless put together at a time when, or a place where, political feeling was extinct—addressed to aristocratic readers. In course of time the value for practical life of its shrewd maxims seems to have caused it to be regarded as eminently suited for educational purposes; and its adoption as part of a Greek boy's education may have been helped by the feeling, which was growing up even in Plato's time, that the old system of confining a boy to one or two authors, whom he learnt by heart, might with advantage be replaced by a curriculum of wider range, a use to which this anthology would lend itself excellently.

As it is by reference to the life and times of Theognis that his works in the *Theognidea* are to be distinguished from the poems which are not by him, the question arises, what do we know of his life and times? And at the outset it must be confessed that it is unfortunately from this anthology, the *Theognidea*, which undoubtedly contains poems by Theognis, and also undoubtedly contains poems not by him, that we have to get our information. But suspicious as this circular mode of argument naturally makes us, we can reasonably accept the outlines, if not the details, which it puts before us. Theognis was born in Megara—the Megara in Greece, not in Sicily—and, although his date is disputed, probably in the first half of the sixth century B.C., so that he flourished about the middle or in the latter half of that century. When Megara had thrown off the yoke of Corinth, she began to display great activity in colonisation, and especially in planting colonies on the shores of the Black Sea. This activity was accompanied by a great extension of her commerce and by a considerable increase in her wealth. But the distribution of this wealth was unequal: riches grew, but poverty also grew, and the gap between the two widened until the social fabric split. An oligarch was, as always in these times, found to betray his fellow-oligarchs and to delude the people. Theagenes put himself at the head of the reform party, and utilised his position to make himself tyrant. Eventually he was overthrown, and then oligarchy and democracy found themselves face to face. A time of confusion and struggling followed, in which sometimes oligarchy, sometimes democracy, got the upper hand, and neither, when victor, showed mercy to the fallen. Each took from the other what was to be had: the democrats confiscated the oligarchs' property, and the oligarchs, to use an expression of Theognis' own in this connection (314), "drank the blood" of the democrats. Weight tells in these encounters, and victory finally remained with the democracy.

These were the political and social conditions under which Theognis lived. The part which he personally took in the struggles of his time we know little about, except that, as is plain from the hatred which his verses show for the democrats, he belonged to the oligarchs. He probably lost his property (345) and went into exile, but afterwards returned to his native country. One elegy (783) states that the author went to Sicily and to Eubœa, and that he was received kindly, but that nothing could reconcile him to exile from his native country. Another couplet (209) complains that an exile has no friends.



It has been inferred (from 261, 257, and 1097) that the woman whom he loved was given in marriage by her parents to some *roturier* because of his wealth, and that after marriage, as before, she preferred Theognis. But although the frequent and bitter complaints of poverty which occur are probably by Theognis (*e.g.* 619 and 649), it is rash to draw such detailed inferences as the above solely on the strength of a combination of passages which may be by different authors and not contain even a word by Theognis. It is better to abandon the attempt to extract personal details, and to content ourselves with the picture which our collection gives of the morality, the society, and the political feeling of the time. The fierce savagery which seems to have been latent at all times among the Greeks, displayed itself in all its murderous cruelty when political conflicts neared or reached the stage of revolution. Theognis prayed "to drink the blood" of the democrats. Elsewhere (847) he says, "Trample on the people, smite them with the keen goad," and so on. It is, however, impossible to live at high pressure always, and Theognis cannot keep up to this level continually. In default, he has a pair of "perpetual epithets," which serve to quietly mark the ever-present oligarchical feeling in his mind towards the mob. Whenever he speaks of "the good," it is understood that he does not mean chiefly men who are distinguished for exemplary lives and morality of conduct, but those who were of the same political views as himself. So when he speaks of "the base," "the craven," he not only meant to connote all that is bad, but also to denote the people. There was one other class of men whom the oligarchs of the time hated as much as, perhaps more than, they did the mob: these were the oligarchs who betrayed their fellows and made themselves tyrants. Not only does Theognis decline to associate with tyrants or mourn over their tombs (1203), he even advocates tyrannicide (1181). Perhaps it was because he hated tyrants on the one side and the democracy on the other, and also because he had the wit to see that even oligarchical rulers did not always govern in the best possible manner (855), that he imagined he followed a *via media* in politics. At any rate, he is never tired of posing as a model of political moderation, and as a pattern which the rising generation should mould themselves on (*e.g.* 219, 367, 331, 544, 945).

The political verses of Theognis, although they would incidentally serve the purpose of educating the rising generation in the right creed, were probably not meant solely for that purpose, but were mainly intended as a relief to, and as the

expression of, his own feelings; and we can imagine that, delivered over the wine after dinner to the accompaniment of the flute, and amid the applause of a sympathising audience, they may have passed for poetry. In those verses which deal with society the didactic element is a large part, though here, too, there are many things which cannot have been intended for the instruction of the young. Beginning with the didactic element, we find that Theognis' advice to his young friend Cyrnus is largely coloured by political considerations. He gives him the excellent advice to associate only with the good; to sit at dinner as near as possible to a good man, so as to carry off some benefit from what he says (563); to always consult, even at the cost of some trouble, a good man (71), for from him you will get good advice (29). The advice to avoid the bad is equally sound; their word is not to be relied on (1168); they are treacherous (65) and unjust (279). But when we find that "the bad" are the people who are responsible for all civil war (44), and are in power (411), we see that the corruption to which the young man who associates with them is liable (35) is rather political than moral; and that "the good," who never bring trouble on a state (43), are the aristocracy. The advice, however, which Theognis gives on the choice and behaviour of friends is better. Gold can be readily tested, but not men (117); time (967) and need (641) are required to show the worth of a man; your friendship should not be forced on any one (371); and when you have gained a friend, you should be slow to believe anything said against him, and should not quarrel about trifles—these are conditions on which alone friendship can exist among men (323, 1151); on the other hand, you must not from a false conception of friendship praise what you do not approve in your friend's conduct; to encourage him in wrong brings punishment from the gods (1081, 851).

From other passages, less didactic in tone, we gather Theognis' views on the state of society in his time. The rock ahead which fills most of his vision is the general worship of wealth. You may be as clever as Sisyphus, as eloquent as Nestor, and as upright as Rhadamanthus himself, but as against wealth all these qualities are nothing worth (699). Wealth is the most desirable of the gods; it can even make a "bad" man a "good" one (1117); the poor man is despised and his tongue is bound (621, 267, 177). The result of this unhealthy state of things is that the "bad" rich intermarry with the "good," the most fundamental social distinctions are overthrown, the race is consequently deteriorating, and there is but little hope for the



country (1109, 183). With society in this state and the government in the hands of the bad (44), we are not surprised to find that friends are treacherous (811), filial ingratitude rampant and not ashamed (273), that no one on earth is happy (167), that the bad triumph insolently over the good (289), and that the best thing for a man is not to be born into this world at all, and the next best thing is to die at once (425).

But it would be an error to imagine that the elegiacs which Theognis delivered after dinner were permanently of this melancholy hue. He had not "le vin triste" always. Much wine, he says (509), is a bad thing, "but if a man drinks scientifically, it is a good thing;" and presumably by this he means attaining to the stage which, with much satisfaction, he elsewhere describes himself as being in—the stage, that is, of "being no longer sober and not yet very drunk" (478); on which occasion, being in a didactic mood, he tells Simonides that he should not wake the sleepers, nor compel any one to stay who does not wish to stay, and not turn out any one who does not wish to go, and should charge the glasses of those who want wine; that he, being in the aforesaid state, is going home. It is perhaps, however, only fair to Theognis to say that it is uncertain how much of this elegy belongs to him. But Theognis was of a sociable disposition, for he declares (627) that it is a disgrace to be drunk when the company is sober, but also a disgrace to be sober when the company is drunk. He lays down the same principle of adapting oneself to the society one is in elsewhere when he says (313), "Amongst the uproarious I am very uproarious, and amongst the proper no man more proper than I." He expressly sets it forth as a rule of conduct by which his young friends are to guide themselves in life, to be friendly in word to everybody (63), and to trust no one, even though he swears by the name of Zeus himself (283). Still more clearly does he express himself when he tells Cyrnus (213) to change his complexion as often as he changes his company, and to take pattern by the cuttlefish, which has no colour of its own, but takes its hue from the rock on which it happens to be.

This last passage does not give us a very high opinion of Theognis' code of morality, and we shall see that he nowhere rises above the level of his time, and that, in place of elevating moral ideas, he gives us worldly wisdom. The ordinary precepts are to be found in Theognis: fear and worship the gods (1179), for from them come good and evil (171); they are to be prayed to in tribulation (554), for they can grant our requests (1115). Courage is not made so much of by him as we should have

expected from the high place which it took in antiquity among the virtues. The references to it and to war are singularly few. Theognis does not expressly enjoin courage anywhere, but he implies that cowardice is disgraceful (889), especially when the country is in danger (825). Against lying he speaks frequently and decidedly (85, 118, 875, 1071), on the ground that it does not do much good, to begin with, and always proves disgraceful (607). Children should honour their parents, because the days of those who do not are few in the land (821). Justice, too, is inculcated: give no man except what is his own (332), and do not yield to the temptations of lucre (465); in justice is comprised every virtue (147). But the golden rule for conduct is, Exceed in nothing; the mean is best in all things (335). This is the better side of the morality of the time; the worse comes out in Theognis quite as nakedly as in any other Greek writer, perhaps more so. It is folly to treat the bad well; you may as well sow the sea, for the good you will reap (105). There are two good reasons for doing no such thing: you waste your own things, and you get no gratitude (955). Theognis goes on a different principle: he prays to Zeus that he may get his enemies on the hip (338), and have revenge (345), plunder them of their property, and drink their blood (561). "Speak your enemy fair," he says (363); "then, when you have him down, strike, and heed not his prayers."

Invaluable as this collection of elegiacs is for the light which it throws on the manners, thought, politics, and morality of the time, it has little value from the point of view of art. There is from beginning to end scarcely a single beauty of thought, expression, or imagery, to be found in it. What apparently was the proëm of Theognis' works (19–24), which is addressed by Theognis in name to his friend Cyrnus, rises above the other pieces in the confidence with which the auther promises Cyrnus and himself eternal and universal fame. There is also another elegy (667–682), comparing the condition of the state to a ship in a storm, which is of considerable beauty, and is far above anything else in the collection; but it is doubtful whether this is the work of Theognis. As a rule, these elegiacs are "lowered to the level of the Dorian understanding." Simple the poetry of Theognis is; sensuous scarcely ever, and never impassioned. Not only does it lack beauty, but it rarely shows any profundity of thought; though, perhaps, this is the common defect of the age, for it is only when the drama and philosophy appear that the Greeks seem to have pondered much on the problems of life. There is no trace of any such speculations in



the early iambic writers or the melic poets, whether writers of choral poetry, as Alcman or Stesichorus, or of personal lyric, as Sappho and Alcæus. Among the elegiac writers we find melodious plaints on the necessity of death in Mimnermus, and querulous fretfulness about the miseries of life in Simonides; but it is not till we come to Solon that we see signs of earnest thought. In Theognis we find that the poet marvels at Zeus, who possesses honour and might, and yet treats the just and the unjust alike (373); how do the gods expect any one to worship them if they continue this course? (743). The conclusion is that the will of Heaven is not plain, nor the way in which a man should walk to please the immortals (743).

To the middle of the sixth century B.C. also belong Demodocus of Leros and Phocylides of Miletus. About the former we know nothing, except that he wrote iambics and epigrams, of which latter one served to suggest to Porson his verses on Hermann. Demodocus said, "The Chians are bad; not one here and one there, but all, except Procles, and Procles is a Chian." With similar wit he attacked the Milesians, of whom he said that they were not stupid, but they acted stupidly. Among the elegiacs of Phocylides we find a couplet which, with the substitution of Lerian for Chian, is word for word the same as that of Demodocus. From this it is inferred that the two poets engaged in a warfare of wit, and that in these two couplets we have the attack and retort. But for the credit of Greek humour it is to be hoped that the inference, which has no basis except the existence of the two couplets, is erroneous. Phocylides, of whose life nothing is known, wrote in hexameters as well as in elegiacs. Usually his utterances in hexameters were brief and gnomic; but we have a longer poem, which was a satire on women, conceived in the same strain and form as that of Simonides. Phocylides, however, instead of ten, has four classes of women, one of which is derived by extraction from the dog, another from the bee, another from the sow, and the fourth from the mare. The shorter utterances are good, practical common sense, and as far removed from being poetry as possible. A small city well governed, he says, is better than a Nineveh (5). Birth is no good if a man can speak neither pleasantly nor sensibly (4). First get a living, then think about improving yourself (10).

Under the name of Phocylides there passed, until the sixteenth century, a long poem in hexameters of 200 verses, containing a string of moral precepts. "The useful poetry of Phocylides," as it is entitled in some manuscripts, is arranged

in a very disorderly and disconnected manner, is not unfrequently ungrammatical, is mixed in its vocabulary, and contains many sentiments quite foreign to Greek thought and ethics. It was this last fact which aroused the suspicions of Sylburg in the sixteenth century, who, however, only ventured to point out that some lines were probably not the work of Phocylides, but of a Christian writer. Joseph Scaliger declared the whole poem to be a forgery and the work of some Christian or Jewish writer, but, after contenting himself with throwing out the hint, left it for some one else to work out. This Jacob Bernays did (*Ueber das phokylideische Gedicht*, Berlin, 1856), and showed that although there are many traces of Jewish beliefs (*e.g.* 84, 139, 140, 147, 207), there is none of any acquaintance with the New Testament. The poem, then, may be set down as the work of a Greek-speaking Jew, who lived probably not before the second century B.C. The place of its origin seems likely to have been Alexandria, for it was there that the Jews came most in contact with Greek learning. The object of the author does not seem to have been a literary forgery, such as have been famous in modern times, for there is no attempt to imitate the style of Phocylides or the brevity of his utterances. Rather the writer seems to have been so concerned with winning acceptance for the morality he preached as to be willing to sacrifice the fame of authorship, if only the name of Phocylides would gain a hearing for him. The decline of the Alexandrine school removed an effectual check on the circulation of forgeries of this and other kinds, and we may thus probably date the pseudo-Phocylidea.

The claim of Hipponax to fame is based on the invention of a new kind of metre, the choliambus or scazon. It is in reality the iambic line with the substitution of a spondee or trochee for an iambus in the last foot. This change gives the line a limping effect—whence the name choliambus or scazon—and deprives it of all beauty, thus making it the appropriate vehicle for the unlovely contents with which Hipponax charged it. Appropriate as the metre was to the use he put it to, its essential deformity prevented it from becoming a favourite or common form of verse, except among fable writers such as Babrius. Hipponax flourished about B.C. 540 as we learn from the *Parian Marble* (42). He was born at Ephesus, and seems to have been expelled thence. Possibly he may have attacked the governor of the city in his verses, and have therefore been turned out; but we have nothing but conjecture to rely on for this. From Ephesus he went to Clazomenæ, and there he seems to have spent the rest of his life, with no very pleasant feelings towards his old home.



From Clazomenæ he was not expelled, but he spent a large part of his time in writing and declaiming defamatory verses against most people he came in contact with. His person seems to have been remarkably ugly: this, which is hard at all times, was particularly so for a Greek, for whom nothing—intellect, virtue, or wealth—could redeem this defect. In the case of Hipponax it was doubly unfortunate, for it gave the enemies he made by his verses an invaluable means of attack, and one which a sculptor, such as Bupalus, could turn to great account. The merits of this encounter between scazons and sculptors are unknown to us, as also is the result. Whether the poverty which Hipponax complains of was much exaggerated by him or not is uncertain, and we are equally ignorant of the date and manner of his death. In addition to the scazon, parody is put down to his invention, but before him Asius had written parodies. As Archilochus wrote iambics and used them against his enemies, it is usual to compare Hipponax with him. But Archilochus was a man of education, refinement, and genius, and he was a poet; whereas Hipponax possessed none of these qualities. His language is that of the gutter when it is not that of the brothel; his vituperation is noisy and not effective; his parodies, such as we have, possess no humour.

Of Ananius, a writer of parodies in iambics, scarcely anything is known. He is said to have been less personal than Hipponax; but there seems to have been some difficulty in deciding whether the works ascribed to him were by him or by Hipponax. Amongst other writers of elegiacs or iambics in later times may be mentioned the tragedian Ion of Chios; Evenus of Paros, the sophist: Critias, one of the thirty tyrants; Hermesianax of Colophon; Hermippus, Herodas, and Kerkidas of Megalopolis.

CHAPTER V.

MELIC AT COURT.

In the verses of Theognis and Alcæus we have seen how oligarchy and tyranny fell out, and democracy—such as it was in ancient times—came by its own. Democracy having triumphed, did not prohibit freedom of speech, and the oligarchs gave vent in their verses to the feelings which exile, confiscation, and loss of power roused in their breasts. It is only from Solon's verses

that we see the other side of the shield, and learn to understand how under oligarchy the people were robbed of their land, driven from their native country, and sold into slavery. But democracy did not triumph everywhere; in various cities tyrants established themselves and their dynasties with more or less permanence. The first use to which they put the wealth that came into their hands by usurpation, was to fortify their position by means of mercenaries; the next, to surround themselves with all the splendour which art and literature could lend to their bad eminence. Thus melic poetry, which had been originally attracted by the fame which Sparta could extend to genius, now left Sparta "in gilded courts to dwell." Some tyrants, as the Pisistratidæ at Athens, turned the resources of art to the adornment of the city over which they exercised their unlawful rule. But most tyrants, as those of Samos and of Syracuse, required artists to celebrate, whether in marble or in poetry, their own virtues, magnificence, exploits, and victories in the national games of Hellas. In both cases, however, what melic poetry now shows us is no longer the spirit animating a nation, as in Tyrtæus, but the luxury of court. The tyrant was now the state; the sufferings or the aspirations of the people could find no voice, and naturally tyrannicidal verses, such as those of Theognis or Alcæus, no hearing.

We may form some idea of the force which the attractions of court exercised when, remembering the difficulties and dangers of ancient travelling, we learn that Ibycus was drawn from his native town in Italy, Rhegium, across land and sea to Samos. Beyond this fact we know little of the life of Ibycus. He seems to have spent some time in Himera and Catana, and may, as is conjectured, have gone to Samos on the invitation of the tyrant Æaces, for the purpose of educating the young Polycrates. But to decide this we ought to know the date of Ibycus, which cannot be given more precisely than that he lived in the latter half of the sixth century B.C. The story of his death, according to Suidas, is that he was plundered and killed by robbers. While dying he pointed to some cranes flying overhead, and declared that they would be his avengers. The robbers returned to the neighbouring town, the name of which Suidas does not give, and were sitting in the theatre, when one of them, seeing a crane, remarked jeeringly to his fellows, "There is one of Ibycus' avengers." This was overheard, and, as Ibycus had disappeared in a remarkable manner, the men were seized, made to confess, and executed. This account has an air of improbability about it, the more so because it is a type



of story not uncommon in folk-lore. When, further, we find that the earliest authority for it is an epigram by Antipater of Sidon, who lived about a hundred years B.C., *i.e.* four hundred years after the fact which he professes to relate, we have very good reason for doubting the accuracy of the story. The origin of the tale as applied to Ibycus we are not in a position to trace; but the name of the poet bears sufficient resemblance to the Greek word *ibykes*, which means birds of some kind, to make it probable that a false etymology attracted this floating story to the name of Ibycus.

We have very few fragments by Ibycus, and very little information about his work in ancient authors. Consequently there is considerable doubt as to the character of his poems and the occasions on which they were delivered. That some of his work must have been of the same nature as the "epic lyric" of Stesichorus seems to be shown by the fact that ancient critics were doubtful whether certain fragments were by Ibycus or Stesichorus. Further, the metre, the length of the strophes, and the large number of mythical allusions in the fragments of Ibycus, show that in method Ibycus followed Stesichorus. But side by side with these pieces of evidence we find in the fragments indications of a wide difference between the two poets. It seems reasonable, therefore, to conclude, that whilst Ibycus was in Sicily he was influenced by Stesichorus, and wrote "epic lyric" such as his master wrote, and as the Sicilians had been accustomed to hear from Stesichorus. But to endeavour, on the hints afforded by casual and doubtful mention of mythical names, to determine the subject and the titles of poems of which we have only the most inconsiderable fragments, and which only conjecturally come under the head of "epic lyric," is an attempt which not even Welcker or Flach can induce us to share in.

In Samos Ibycus seems to have modelled himself on Anacreon, who had come to the court of Polycrates before him, as in Sicily on Stesichorus. Love and wine were the themes which the luxurious surroundings and the native taste of Anacreon prompted him to sing of; and though we have no reason to believe that Ibycus sang of wine, love was the never-ending burden of his melodies. In the ardour and violence of his passion, Ibycus, according to Cicero (*Tusc.* iv. 33. 71), far outstripped Anacreon. Stesichorus had treated of love in his poems, but in his poetry it had either been subordinate to the epic interest of his lyric, or, if it had formed the main subject of some of his poems, as it probably did in the *Radina* and the *Calyca*, it was treated

of by him in narrative form, and he related the hopeless love of some imaginary hero or heroine. But Ibycus treated of love, not in a narrative, but in a lyric strain. It was his own feeling which he was pouring forth in his verses; and although he sought for parallels in ancient story, and interwove mythological incidents into his odes in the fashion of Pindar, the source and the subject of his song were his own emotions. In short, in passing from Sicily to Samos, he left behind the somewhat cold and artificial mode of conception which characterised Stesichorus, and entered the glowing atmosphere which developed Æolian lyric.

In one important point, however, the melic of Ibycus differed from that of Lesbos; his odes were choral, whereas those of Alcæus and Sappho were for solo delivery; and this raises the difficult question, how did Ibycus reconcile his subject with the occasions and manner of choral execution? In his attempt to fuse the expression of the personal feelings of the lyric poet with that of the sentiments associated with a public festival or ceremonial, Ibycus reminds us of Alcman, who in Sparta attempted the same experiment, and it is natural to conjecture that Ibycus set to work in the same way as Alcman. But there are no traces in the few fragments we possess of any such addresses of the poet to the chorus or individual members of the chorus as are found in Alcman's odes, and nothing in any ancient authority to support the conjecture. The suggestion that these choral odes were composed and sung in honour of the victors in contests of personal beauty, such as were indeed held in various Greek cities, seems to be rebutted by the consideration that there is no evidence to show the existence of such contests in Samos, and that such contests were for female beauty only. The solution of the difficulty must be sought elsewhere. The fact that the odes of Ibycus were, as is shown by their metre, choral, and therefore performed in public, shows that the young men who were thus celebrated had achieved some success which called for public congratulation; and it seems easiest to suppose that this success was in the public games, and that the odes thus resembled the encomia and epinikia which Pindar wrote.

Few as the fragments by Ibycus are, they give us a high opinion of his poetical merit; and small as most of them are, they bear the mark of grace and beauty. In reading them we are transported into a region of sweet sounds and beautiful sights. We are surrounded by roses, violets, and myrtles (6); there are kingfishers (8) in the flowing streams which run



through maidens' gardens (1); the nightingales (7) sing as the stars shine the long night through (3); all breathes spring, and joy, and peace, except the poet's heart, where a blast as of Boreas rages beneath the lightning (1).

Among the literary consequences of the introduction of tyranny into the system of Greek politics was not only the crystallisation of choral poetry round tyrants' courts, but also the attraction thither of poets such as Anacreon, who wrote lyric songs after the fashion of the Æolian ode. To assign this centripetal force as the sole cause of this phenomenon would, however, be an inadequate explanation; we must consider the negative as well as the positive conditions, that is, why lyric song did not survive under democracies on the fall of oligarchy, as well as why it migrated to tyrannies. That department of melic poetry of which the greatest representatives were Sappho and Alcæus, and which, to distinguish it from choral melic, we will call lyric song, although its roots are to be found in the songs of the people, attained to literary form and merit only in oligarchies. It was only among the ruling classes of oligarchically governed states that there existed the literary and musical cultivation necessary for the production of high work, and for the intelligent appreciation and encouragement of it when produced. The public to which the lyric poet thus addressed himself was narrow, but it contained all whose criticism was worth obtaining, and whose praise the poet cared for. Further, the very narrowness of the poet's circle, in which all were acquaintances and most were friends, was the most favourable condition under which a kind of poetry, whose essence is the expression of the poet's personal emotions, could possibly be developed; for the poet's mode of life was that of his hearers, his feelings were their feelings, his prejudices their prejudices, his politics, when he touched on them, his beliefs and his morality, the same as theirs. All this, when oligarchy was overthrown, was changed. At first sight it might appear as though there were no reason why, when democracy succeeded oligarchy, lyric song should not have continued to flourish, if only the poet would address himself to the new public which was growing, and seek his inspiration in the wider circle of emotions and beliefs which all Greeks felt in common. But this is to overlook an important condition which regulated the development of Greek literature, and was the cause of the difference in form between the literature of Greek and of modern times. Without a public, art and literature cannot exist. The manner, therefore, in which an artist is brought into contact with his public is a matter of

the greatest importance in its effects on the course and form of literature. Until the time of Isocrates, a Greek author obtained publicity, not by means of the multiplication and circulation of copies of his works, but by means of the oral delivery of his productions. In the case of choral poetry, the performance by the chorus constituted this oral delivery; and as choruses were performed in public and on public occasions, the audience consisted of all the citizens of the state, and was the largest to which an author could address himself. In the case of lyric song the poet was his own performer; the occasion was private, not public, being some banquet at which the author's friends were gathered together, and his public was consequently considerably smaller. It is this fact which mainly explains the decay of lyric song under democracy. Under an oligarchy the poet's public was small, but it was practically in intelligence and power the state. When democracy supervened, the oligarchical classes no longer had the monopoly of government and culture; they sank into the subordinate position of a party, and of a party out of joint with the times. The audience of the poet thus became narrow in all senses of the word; and although Theognis was an elegiac and not a melic poet, he shows in the confined and lifeless flight of his verse how evilly a clique reacts on an artist. Within the area, then, of democracy, lyric song disappeared, and in tyrannies it survived, for there the court formed a centre of art and culture, and provided a public whose appreciation was for some poets as powerful an allurement as were the more material rewards offered by the tyrant to others. But before proceeding to consider the effect which the change from oligarchy to tyranny had on lyric song, we have to notice a fact which confirms and completes our theory of the disappearance of lyric song under democracy. It is this, that as soon as in democracy occasions and means were found by which the lyric poet could reach the great public, *i.e.* the whole body of citizens, then great poets were forthcoming to give expression to emotions and beliefs which all their fellow-citizens, and not merely a clique, could feel and understand. The contrivance which, under democracy, put the poet into direct relation with the great public, was the theatre: lyric song, choral poetry, and iambics were fused and transmuted into drama; and in the melic parts of tragedy we hear the lyric poet uttering, to an audience greater than that which he addressed, his meditations on the meaning of life.

Anacreon, who was born of good family and connected with Solon, was a native of the island of Teos. When the tide of



Persian invasion swept over Teos as over other islands off the coast of Asia Minor, Anacreon seems to have emigrated with his fellow-citizens to Abdera in Thrace. How long he remained there we do not know, but thence he proceeded to Samos, probably a few years before Ibycus arrived there. From the time that Polycrates was a boy until the time when he was treacherously murdered by the Persian satrap Oroetes, Anacreon enjoyed the friendship and confidence of the tyrant of Samos. Doubtless it was as a minister to the pleasures and as an ornament to the court of Polycrates that Anacreon chiefly figured in Samos, but he also exercised an occasional influence over the greedy and cruel policy of the despot. After the assassination of Polycrates Anacreon went to Athens, though whether he went straight there or first went to Asia Minor or to Abdera, is uncertain. In any case, his reputation as a poet was so well established that Hipparchus, the tyrant of Athens, invited him to his court, and sent a vessel to convey him thither. It was at Athens probably that Anacreon died, in his eighty-fifth year, in the enjoyment of a fresh and green old age.

Anacreon wrote some short hymns to the gods, but his chief work, and that on which his reputation was based, comprised five books of elegies, iambics, and lyric song. He did not open up any new field in lyric, but contented himself in following with less genius and less earnestness the paths which Archilochus and the Lesbian poets had made before him. At the same time he availed himself of all the technical improvements in metre and music with which successive generations of poets had enriched their art, to a degree and with a skill in which Sappho alone surpassed him. It is in finish, not force, in workmanship, not genius, in the lightness of his touch, not earnestness of feeling, that the merit of Anacreon lies. Dionysius (*de Comp. Verb.* 23) selects him, after Sappho, as representative of the "smooth" style or harmony. On this authority we may take it that in the qualities of melody Anacreon excelled. Unfortunately the few notes which are left are so scattered that we cannot reconstruct the melody. But in perfect music there is, as well as melody, harmony; and in the fragments of a perfect poet, although time may obliterate much, harmony is left, though the melody be past reconstruction. Thus Sappho struck chords which still vibrate, but in Anacreon the melody has perished; harmonies there never were. This want of depth in Anacreon's poetry corresponds to and is the result of a want of depth in his nature. By this we do not mean merely the absence of any reflection on the more serious problems and aspects of life

There is no obligation on the poet to treat of such subjects, and the absence of such reflections does not constitute a poetical delinquency. No subject is forbidden the artist which he can make matter of art; but having chosen his subject, he must treat it as art. He must deal with morality, if he chooses the subject, or politics, not as a moralist or a politician, but as an artist; and whether his work be good moral or political philosophy, or whether it be bad, are considerations which, when settled, obviously do not in the least help us to decide whether his work is or is not good poetry. It is therefore, on the terms of art, no charge against Anacreon that he did not philosophise on life, and did sing "the praise of love and wine;" but it does detract from his worth as a poet that his notes are not full, and that his song lacks expression.

Of the three qualities necessary to poetry, that it should be "simple, sensuous, and impassioned," Anacreon's work possesses the first only in any eminent degree; and it is in the comparative failure of the other two that his weakness consists. Images are rare in Anacreon, and in this rarity we have a partial explanation of his inferiority to Sappho, who also sang the praise of love, and whose smallest fragments may contain a picture, a vision, and a thing of beauty. The most serious defect, however, is that Anacreon wrote of love and wine, the sources of violent emotions, and his poetry is inadequately impassioned. As there are things to the beauty of which a certain magnitude is necessary, so for the emotions a certain intensity is requisite; and this intensity Anacreon failed of. There is no impetuosity in his drinking-songs, and no irresistible enchantment in his love-songs. Love and wine are amusements with him, and the amusements of a man who has nothing to do but amuse himself. They aroused only superficial feelings in him—there was nothing more to arouse—and his expression of them is superficial. His touch was light, but not tender.

Anacreon's defects as a poet made for his success as a court bard. In a court in which ministers of pleasure of both sexes were collected from all parts of Europe and Asia Minor for the entertainment of the tyrant, Anacreon naturally attained a high position. His verses were not too high for the intelligence, or too deep for the feelings, of his patron and his audience. His character, too, was equally well suited to his surroundings. While avoiding all excess—he lived to be eighty-five—he is described (Critias in *Ath.* xiii. 600D) as charming in manner, a deceiver of women, and the life of a drinking-party. His conquests were as facile as his verses, and his potations as deep



as his poetry. Anacreon reflects life at court as faithfully as Alcæus does the life of an oligarch. But the difference between the latter, who wrote "because the numbers came," and the court poet, who celebrated in lyric verse the reigning beauty of either sex from time to time, was great. In Alcæus or Sappho we have a poet singing songs unbidden—

> "Till the world is wrought
> To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not."

In Anacreon we have a poet who wrote, not to command, indeed, but on all occasions; and the poet who writes indifferently on any occasion is in danger of writing indifferently on all. However, the poetry of Anacreon marks the highest point to which the atmosphere of tyranny would allow lyric song to grow; and that it grew so high and so shapely was because the temperament of Anacreon harmonised so well with the demands of his post and his patron. The passion of a Sappho would have found little sympathy, or the pride of an Alcæus little room, in such a court as that of Polycrates. Anacreon's nature, less deep and less lofty, was adapted to the environment, and was further endowed with the gift of a finished literary style. But this conjunction of qualities did not occur afterwards or elsewhere, and tyranny, though it promised to support lyric song, proved more barren of substance than did democracy.

Simonides, as we learn from an inscription (Fr. 147B) which he wrote to commemorate the victory, in a choral contest at Athens, of the tribe Antiochis with a poem of his composing, was the son of Leoprepes, and was eighty years of age at the time of this victory. As he mentions the archonship of Adeimantus as the date of this event, it follows that he was born in the year B.C. 556. The place of his birth was a small island, Ceos, one of the Cyclades. The inhabitants of the island were Ionians, but the neighbourhood of the Peloponnesus affected the Ceans in various ways, and, what is important for our purpose, familiarised them with the choral worship of Apollo, and with the custom of parthenia or choruses sung by girls. The cultivation in Ceos of choral poetry decided the line which Simonides' impulse to poetry was to take. At an early age he was concerned in the production of choruses, and fulfilled the duties of choir-master. Although, unlike Anacreon, he possessed some patriotism, and celebrated his country in his song (223), he was not content to remain for ever a choir-master in Ceos, but was attracted, by visions of fame, fortune, and themes greater than Ceos could afford, to travel far and wide to brilliant courts and

centres of cultivation. In Athens the tyrant Pisistratus had been succeeded by his sons Hippias and Hipparchus, and they were carrying on the work, which their father had begun, of decorating Athens and educating the Athenians by means of everything which art, literature, and learning could supply. In pursuit of this policy the Pisistratidæ freely lavished money, and Simonides received large sums from them.

The form of choral poetry which at this time was chiefly cultivated at Athens was the dithyramb. This, which at once was a religious service, a form of literature, and an entertainment for the people, was not in its origin, nature, or object specially subservient to tyranny. It was not performed for the gratification or the honour of the tyrant; nor was it merely an entertainment for the people, to keep them in good-humour with the tyranny; it was also an entertainment by the people. As in later times dramatists competed for a prize at the festivals of Dionysus, and each poet applied to the state for a choregus to put his play upon the stage, and the chorus which performed in the play was furnished by one of the tribes; so in the times of the Pisistratidæ and of the dithyramb, the author of a dithyramb applied for a choregus and a tribe which should supply a chorus to learn, rehearse, and finally perform his dithyramb in the contests at the festivals of Dionysus. When the drama developed out of the dithyramb, this manner of procedure continued; and this explains how it was that in the time of the drama the choregus, although he bore all the expenses entailed by the maintaining, teaching, and dressing of those members of his tribe who formed the dramatic chorus, had not to bear any part of the rest of the expense incurred in the production of the play. The prize which the successful poet in a dithyramb contest won was not any pecuniary benefit to the victor, for it was dedicated by him as a votive offering to the god. The gold which Simonides carried off from Athens came to him as gifts, either from the tyrant, who was gratified to have so good a poet compete in his city, or possibly from rich citizens for whom Simonides had specially composed poems in celebration of some victory they had achieved in the public games or in the memory of some relative they had lost. The epinikia which he thus composed remained popular in Athens for generations, and were in the mouths of the Athenians in the time of Aristophanes.[1] With his competitors, amongst whom at Athens was Lasus, Simonides never seems to have got on well. He was a formidable rival not only in the exercise of his art, but even more

[1] *Eq.* 407; *Nub.* 1356.



so in the tact, the worldly wisdom, and the courtly deference which won him so much success in dealing with the great.

In Thessaly, as well as in Athens, Simonides was the guest of tyrants. We still have almost complete (5) an encomium or eulogy written by Simonides in honour of Scopas on his death. Scopas was a tyrant whose rule does not seem to have been light nor his character amiable. But Simonides, having to eulogise him professionally, adroitly and artistically steers between the risk of offending the Scopadæ and the danger of exciting ridicule by lauding virtues which the deceased had not. He confines himself to generalities: perfectly virtuous men do not occur; practically we have to take the good with the evil. Pittacus, the sage, much understated the fact when he said that it was hard to be good—that is an attribute of God, not man; the man who does not voluntarily do anything disgraceful is much to be praised, but against destiny, of course no one can fight. The skill of this cannot be denied; and although Simonides takes up the dead Scopas very tenderly and delicately, he cannot be accused of servility. To only hint that Scopas had his failings may have been gross adulation. We do not know. But having to write an encomium and to write it for gold, Simonides could not have well sold less of his conscience. Other poets with less sense of artistic propriety would have sold more. We know little about the Scopadæ. It seems probable that the whole dynasty perished suddenly and together; and this is perhaps the only kernel of fact which is contained in the story that Scopas gave Simonides half the reward he expected for a eulogy, and bade him apply to the Dioscuri, whom Simonides had also praised in the eulogy, for the other half. At this moment Simonides was summoned from the hall to speak with two strangers, and no sooner was he in the open air than the building fell with a crash, killing Scopas and all his family. The Dioscuri had paid their debt.

The Scopadæ were not the only tyrants in Thessaly that Simonides visited. He also went to Larissa, and placed his services at the disposal of the Aleuadæ, who were maintaining secret and treacherous relations with the Persian king, and were offering to assist him in his invasion of Greece. From this court Simonides went again to the city which was the soul and the centre of the Greek resistance to Persia—Athens—there to celebrate by the epigrams, on which his fame principally rests, the defeat of the Persians at Marathon, at Salamis, and at Platæa. In Athens the democracy had triumphed over the tyranny; Hipparchus had been slain, Hippias had fled to Persia;

and Simonides became as much at home under the democracy as he had been under the tyranny. He was as intimate with Themistocles as with the Pisistratidæ, and he glorified the assassins of Hipparchus as readily and as artistically as he had honoured Hipparchus himself. His former relations with the tyrants did not prevent the Athenians from intrusting him with the honour of celebrating in verse their victories over the Persians, nor induce them to prefer the epigram on Marathon by their own Æschylus to that written by Simonides. In Corinth and in Sparta he was welcomed as much as in Athens, and he made himself the friend of the haughty Pausanias as successfully as he had won the friendship of the astute Themistocles.

But at this time art, literature, and culture found their best field and their most munificent reward in Sicily, at the court of Syracuse. Not only was Epicharmus performing his comedies there, but Æschylus voyaged thither, and there wrote and put on the stage tragedies, of which some were inspired by his visit, as the *Women of Ætna*, some had been already performed in Athens. To Syracuse, also, Bacchylides, the nephew of Simonides, was drawn, and, greater than either, Pindar, now only a young man, but great enough already to defeat Simonides. Between Simonides and Pindar there existed the same rivalry, embittered by personal feelings, as at Athens had intervened between Simonides and Lasus; and, though the fragments of Simonides show no traces of this rivalry, it appears in passages of Pindar. With Hiero, however, the tyrant of Syracuse, Simonides was on the best of terms, and we find him assuring Hiero's wife, with the courtier-like suavity which characterised him, that wealth is before wisdom. It would not be altogether fair to condemn Simonides of insincerity in saying this, for he was the first poet who wrote for gold. This shocked the Greeks, as teaching for pay also shocked them. Art and learning were sacred things. It was as disgraceful to traffic in them as in beauty. This feeling is probably largely responsible for the accusations of avarice which were made against Simonides, though there was also much in his conduct to give countenance to the charge. Sicily he must have found a fertile field, for commissions were not forthcoming from Syracuse and Hiero alone, but from Agrigentum, Rhegium, and Croton as well. Up to the latest year of his life he seems to have worked, and his command over the technical resources of his art, his tact, skill, and adroitness in managing his subject-matter, seem to have gained more and more as he gained more experience,



until he died B.C. 467, in Syracuse, at the age of eighty-nine.

Simonides was a writer of choral poetry, not of lyric song, and in his long life he attained a mastery over every form of choral melic. He composed hymns to the gods, pæans to Apollo, dithyrambs in honour of Dionysus, hyporchemes with their accompaniment of dancing, prosodia or processional hymns, and parthenia; but his poetry was not confined to the worship of the gods, he applied it also to honouring and commemorating men, both for their public achievements and their private virtues, and with this object he composed encomia, epinikia, and threni or dirges. and in addition to these choral forms of poetry also skolia or drinking songs, elegies, and epigrams. In the domain of religious poetry Simonides did not attain such celebrity as in the rest of choral melic. His command of language, his exquisite diction, the smoothness and sweetness of his style, his mastery over all the technical resources of his art, raised even his religious poetry to a high standard; but this formal excellence could not compensate for shallowness of feeling and the want of profound conviction. But even here, where his natural defects were most conspicuous and most damaging, his grasp was so firm that he set dithyramb on the path it was to follow, though he wrested it from the special service of the god whom it was originally intended to honour. We have nothing left of his dithyrambs except the titles of two, the *Memnon* and the *Rape of Europa*, and although we have no conception of the way in which he contrived to harmonise these subjects with the form and the traditions of the dithyramb, the titles are enough to show that Simonides abandoned the custom of taking the adventures of Dionysus as the subject of the dithyramb. This was a step of great importance, for it determined the subsequent history of this form of choral poetry.

Thus even on religious melic Simonides left his mark, and on the rest of choral lyric he exercised even greater influence. He elevated the threnos or dirge from the level of monody to the dignity of choral performance. He gave to epinikia, the public celebration of a victory in the national games, the shape which they were destined to retain. Encomia, which belonged to the same genus as epinikia, but were laudations of a more private character, were the work of his invention. In poetry not choral, epigram, though its functions had been determined by his predecessors, Simonides exalted to a pinnacle of fame in literature to which no other poet could have lifted it. As it

was to these forms of poetry that Simonides gave their make and shape in literature, it was in them that he attained his highest excellence. In epinikia, smooth and finished as his work was, and high as he ranked, he could not be compared with Pindar. Setting aside the difference between the inspired and the uninspired poet, we find that even in respect of style and excellence of form Pindar was superior, though in a different way, to Simonides; for whereas Simonides shares with Anacreon the honour of the second place in representing the "smooth" style of lyric, Pindar occupies without rival the highest position in the "severe" style. In encomia, which were a lower form of art, Simonides achieved greater excellence. These eulogies on people who frequently had but little worthy of eulogy afforded admirable opportunities for the exercise of the tact, courteousness, and knowledge of the world which Simonides possessed in an eminent degree, and which explain both his invention and his successful cultivation of encomia. In dirges or threni his reputation stood even higher: in these poems not only was the style excellent, as always with Simonides, but that which it clothed was also excellent. Simonides' poetry rarely soared with the bold flight of genius, but in the threni it did affect the emotions. It was pathetic and extremely moving. This form of poetry Simonides must have cultivated with affection—with the affection which comes of and to successful work; for he did not content himself with composing dirges for real persons, as, *e.g.* on the Scopadæ, but took mythical heroes and heroines as subjects. This gave him more room to work in, and he accordingly produced better work. It fortunately happens that we still have a fragment of his threnos on Danaë (37), amongst the most beautiful of the bequests from Greek literature which time has allowed to come down to us. Acrisius having been warned by an oracle that he would meet his death at the hands of a child born of his daughter Danaë, committed her and her child Perseus to the waves in a chest to perish. The fragment by Simonides pictures Danaë and Perseus in the darkness of the coffer driven by the wind over the stormy sea. Danaë, with her arm round her sleeping child and his face against hers, talks to him: he sleeps and she is so full of care; he would not sleep if he knew their danger. Then she says to him, "But sleep, baby; and sleep, sea and trouble too. Zeus! grant us respite and forgive my prayer." This fragment enables us to see for ourselves the two qualities which ancient critics recognised as existing to a high degree in Simonides' poetry—his clearness and his pathos. By clearness is meant the poet's



power of conveying to the reader's or hearer's mind the very picture which the poet himself sees with his mind's eye. In this fragment the pathos consists partly in the picture of the child sleeping "avec l'ignorance de l'ange," and of the mother talking to the child of the danger which he does not understand. Pathetic, however, as Simonides, by the testimony of this fragment, was, he was probably inferior even in this quality to Pindar, who stood to him in the same relation as Æschylus to Euripides. Pathos has been considered the special province of Euripides as of Simonides, but the strength of Æschylus enabled him on fitting occasions to excel Euripides in intensity of pathos, as probably Pindar's strength gave him pathetic powers greater, if more rarely used, than those of Simonides. The department of poetry in which Simonides stands without a rival is that of epigram. The glorious victories which the Greeks achieved over the Persians were celebrated by offerings to the gods, and these offerings required some inscription worthy of the deeds commemorated, as did also the graves of the warriors who fell nobly for their country. In Simonides was found the poet capable of composing the epigrams thus called for. His success in this form of composition was due to the quality of self-restraint that is the chief merit of all his poetry. The defeat of the Persian was a theme on which a contemporary would find it difficult to be anything but expansive. It furnished Phrynichus and Æschylus with the material for monuments of genius in the shape of tragedies depicting the downfall of the innumerable host of the barbarians. The tribute of tragedy to the heroes of Hellas was properly monumental, but in epigrams, which were themselves to be but inscriptions on monuments, whether to the gods or to the fallen patriots, qualities of another kind were required. Description, such as was appropriate in tragedy, was excluded by the brevity that the form of epigram necessitated. Praise, in any direct form, would be superfluous, and even offensive, on memorials, and for deeds which were themselves their own praise. Many words were to be avoided; self-restraint was above all necessary, and, considering the pride of patriotism, above all difficult. The tact that could select precisely what should be said, and, saying little, could yet say all, was the prerogative of Simonides. It was not so much genius as artistic feeling, the sense of propriety and perfect workmanship, that epigram called for; and these qualities were precisely those in which the excellence of Simonides consisted. And this may stand for our judgment on the poetry of Simonides in general. The praise which we have accorded

to him all will admit to be deserved, and for abjudicating his claims to genius we have the authority of Pindar (*Ol.* ii. 86), who, although he was a rival of Simonides and spoke with somewhat of the acerbity of rivalry, was likely, even if he struck harder than a more impartial critic, not to strike at the wrong place, but to detect more surely than any modern critic the weak point in Simonides.

The low estimate formed by Pindar of Bacchylides has been generally accepted. Bacchylides was the nephew of Simonides, who probably initiated him into the service of the Muses. Like Simonides, Bacchylides cultivated all kinds of lyric poetry, and in all cases Bacchylides seems to have faithfully followed in the footsteps of Simonides. Other choral lyric poets of this period were Lasus of Hermione, who was cultivated by Hipparchus, was devoted especially to the composition of dithyrambs, and was said to have given instruction to Pindar; Melanippides the elder, Apollodorus of Athens, Tynnichus of Chalcis, Lamprokles, Kydias, Hybrias, and Diagoras.

CHAPTER VI.

PINDAR.

PINDAR was born B.C. 521 (less probably B.C. 517) in Cynoscephalæ, a suburb of Thebes, and, appropriately enough in one who was to sing of victories achieved in the national games of Hellas, he was born in the month Munychion, during the celebration of the Pythian games. He belonged to the illustrious family of the Ægidæ (*Pyth.* v. 72), who traced their pedigree to the time of Cadmus, and counted distinguished branches in Dorian lands as well as in Thebes. Thus by descent Pindar was inclined to sympathise with Dorian and aristocratic tendencies, while the connection of the Ægidæ with the temples and oracles of Greece may partly account for his cultivation of the choral poetry that was devoted mainly to the worship of the gods. In spite of the contempt which the Athenians had for the Bœotians—"Bœotian swine" was one of the expressions in which this contempt found vent—the Bœotians were neither wholly excluded from refining influences by their depressing climate, nor wholly destitute of native artists. The music of the flute was cultivated with much success, and Pindar, though by far the greatest, was not the only poet whom Bœotia pro-



duced. The existence of Pindar would of itself point to the cultivation of music and choral poetry in Bœotia, if we knew nothing more, as the knowledge of the position of some of the stars possessed by some ancient nations proves their acquaintance with a certain amount of mathematics, though these have left no other trace. But we are not reduced to conjecture of this sort in the present case. The earliest instruction given to Pindar, and the earliest artists who fired his poetic instincts, were Bœotian. His knowledge of the flute was derived from Scopelinus, who is sometimes stated to have been his father, sometimes his stepfather; and from the poetesses Myrtis and Corinna, Pindar learned something, though whether in the way of instruction or rivalry is uncertain; probably they affected him in both ways. There is a story that Corinna criticised his early efforts adversely, on the ground that they displayed a poverty of mythological content. This is a charge which cannot justly be brought against those odes of his that we possess; and Corinna herself seems to have recognised this, for later she warned him "to sow with the hand and not with the sack."

The earliest fact that we know with certainty in Pindar's literary career is the composition of the tenth Pythian Ode, which he wrote at the early age of twenty. The Pythian games, which were one of the four national games of Hellas—the Olympian, the Pythian, the Nemean, and the Isthmian—derived their name from Pythius, an epithet of Apollo, given him in commemoration of his slaying the dragon Pytho. They were held on the Crissæan plain in the neighbourhood of Delphi, the oracle of Apollo. Originally the contests at this festival were musical, and the subject of the nomes that were composed for the contest was the praise of Apollo. In course of time athletic games were added, in imitation of the Olympian games; but at all times the musical, literary, and artistic competitions were the distinguishing feature of the Pythian, and excelled even those of the Olympian games. Although athletic games were added in imitation of the Olympian festival, the Amphictyons, who had the management of the Pythia, did not slavishly confine themselves to the programme of the Olympia, but introduced events which the Olympians subsequently borrowed. Among these contests was the double foot-race (*diaulos*) for boys, *i.e.* a race to the end of the course (*stadium*) and back again—440 yards. It is in honour of Hippocleas, who won this race in B.C. 502, that Pindar composed the tenth of the Pythian Odes, which, like the rest, are arranged not chronologically, but according to the

importance of the victory celebrated. That is to say, chariot or horse races are ranked first, and then come boxing and wrestling matches, the pancratia, and finally the foot races. Odes composed in honour of a victor in the national games were sometimes sung on the spot, but more frequently they were performed by his friends on his return home. The celebration of the victory was not merely a public, but also a religious ceremony, for thanks were publicly paid to the gods for the honour which by their favour the victor had won for the city. A solemn procession was made to the temple, thanks and a sacrifice were offered to the gods, and the proceedings closed with a banquet. During some part of the ceremony the triumphal ode, which some friend of the victor engaged a poet to compose, was sung by a chorus trained for the occasion. Sometimes the ode was sung during the procession to the temple, but more frequently at the banquet. The tenth Pythian Ode, which was composed by Pindar at the request of Thorax, one of the Aleuadæ, who reigned at Larissa, was probably sung at the banquet. The subjects which Pindar had to treat of in this ode were, as we can see, pretty well defined beforehand. Hippocleas, the victor, and Thorax would naturally be mentioned; and as they both belonged to the family of the Aleuadæ, some myth connected with that family would naturally suggest itself. Again, as the father of Hippocleas had himself won victories in the national games, the fact would appropriately be referred to in a triumphal ode honouring his son. Finally, the god Apollo, at whose festival the victory had been won, would claim some verses from the poet. To these necessary topics Pindar confines himself; but in this, the first of his triumphal odes, he already shows complete skill in interweaving his subjects in such a manner that they seem to rise as a series of pictures spontaneously to the poet's mind, and not to be the ingenious mosaic of a professional writer of occasional verse. The Aleuadæ claimed to be descended from Heracles, whose descendants ruled also in Lacedæmon; and with an allusion to this connection between the two states—a connection of which Thessaly would be proud to be reminded—Pindar opens the ode, justifying this compliment to Thessaly on the ground that it is of one of the Aleuadæ, Hippocleas, the winner of the Diaulos, that he is about to sing. To Apollo is due the praise for this victory, as for the victories of Hippocleas' father at Olympia and at the Pythia. Father and son have thus attained the greatest happiness and pride which are possible for mortals: to do more, to achieve such an exploit as to penetrate to the mysterious land of the Hyperboreans, is only for the gods, or for such a hero as



Perseus (an ancestor of Heracles and therefore of the Aleuadæ) aided by a god. Pindar then describes the happy race of Hyperboreans, who know neither sickness nor death, labour nor war, but laugh, sing, dance, and carouse "with golden bay-leaves in their hair." From this story of Perseus Pindar recalls himself suddenly—for "his song of praise flitteth like a honey-bee from tale to tale"[1]—as though he had been carried away by his verse; and, with a compliment to Thorax and the Aleuadæ, who govern the Thessalians well, he concludes.

Although Pindar received his earliest instruction in Thebes from Scopelinus, Myrtis, and Corinna, he went to Athens to learn more. There he found Apollodorus, Agathocles, and Lasus of Hermione at work, and them he took as his masters. At this early period of his life was laid the foundation of that friendship which ever after existed between him and the Athenian people, in spite of Pindar's Theban birth. This visit to Athens probably had its influence on Pindar's style, as it certainly had on his vocabulary, though we cannot trace it very precisely.

The next fact which is known to us in Pindar's literary career is the composition of the sixth Pythian Ode, at the age of twenty-eight (B.C. 349). This ode commemorates the victory of a chariot driven by Thrasybulus, to whose father, Xenocrates, the brother of Theron, tyrant of Agrigentum, the chariot and horses belonged, and who was consequently proclaimed as victor. The ode is short, is addressed to Thrasybulus, and was probably sung at Delphi; for this ode, like the tenth, celebrates a Pythian victory. It is indeed probable, seeing that the four earliest odes by Pindar celebrate victories at the Pythia, the festival of the god of Delphi, that Pindar's family connection with Delphi determined the direction of his first efforts to the celebration of Pythian victories. The sixth Pythian Ode is short and simple alike in style and composition; this victory in the chariot race has earned for Xenocrates a treasure of song which "neither wind nor wintry rain-storm coming from strange lands, as a fierce host born of the thunderous cloud, shall carry into the hiding-places of the sea." Thrasybulus, the son, and also the charioteer of Xenocrates, has honoured his father; and in his filial piety he is like Antilochus, who, when his father's horses were killed in the battle by Paris, and his father, Nestor, was being attacked by Memnon, bought his father's life by his own. "These things are of the past," Pindar admits, "but of men

[1] Throughout this chapter the quotations are from the admirable translation of Pindar by Mr. Ernest Myers (Macmillan, 1884).

that now are, Thrasybulus hath come nearest to our fathers' gauge."

In the same year (B.C. 494) that Xenocrates won the chariot race at the Pythian games, Midas of Akragas, for whom the twelfth Pythian Ode was written, won the flute-playing match. The same player was winner in the same contest in B.C. 490, and it is uncertain for which victory the ode was composed. The twelfth ode is shorter, and even more simple in structure, than the sixth. It was probably sung during the procession to the temple, for it contains only strophes and antistrophes; whereas those odes which contain also epodes were probably sung at the banquet; for it was customary for the chorus to stand still during the singing of the epodes, a fact which would seem to point to the conclusion that odes containing epodes could hardly well be sung during a procession. The ode opens with an appeal to the fair city of Akragas to welcome Midas, who has beaten all Hellas "in the art which once on a time Pallas Athene devised, when she made music of the fierce Gorgon's death-lament." By means of this transition Pindar is carried on to tell the story of Perseus, who penetrated to the dim mysterious country of the three Grey Sisters, robbed them of the one eye which they possessed in common, and slew the Gorgon Medusa, whose head even in death possessed the power of changing to stone whatever it was turned on. Armed with the Medusa's head, Perseus took vengeance on Polydectes, his mother's oppressor. Thus Perseus, like Midas, achieved a victory; but (and, with this implied warning to Midas not to exult overmuch in the moment of triumph, the ode closes) there shall be a time that shall lay hold on a man unaware, and shall give him one thing beyond his hope, but another it shall bestow not yet.

In B.C. 490 Pindar wrote the seventh Pythian Ode to commemorate the victory of Megacles, the Athenian, in the chariot-race. The ode is short, which is not strange, as it was sung at Delphi on the evening of the victory; and it is perfunctory. Megacles belonged to the distinguished family of the Alcmæonidæ, who had contributed large sums to the rebuilding of the temple of Delphi. He had himself won many victories in the various national games, and had been banished from Athens twice. Pindar touches very briefly on these topics, and dismisses the whole matter in a score of lines. The year B.C. 490, the thirty-second of Pindar's life, was the date of something more important even than victories in chariot-racing. It was the year in which the Athenians defeated the Persians at Marathon. On this great victory, however, Pindar at the time looked

with the same eyes as his fellow-Thebans. Later, indeed, he came to understand the value of the services which Athens at this time and in the second Persian war rendered to all Hellas; but at first he probably, like his fellow-citizens, only saw in the battle of Marathon a victory for the state with which Thebes was frequently at war, and for which she always entertained feelings of hostility. With any victory won by the democracy of Athens the aristocrats of Thebes could have but little sympathy. Between the battle of Marathon, B.C. 490, and the battle of Salamis, B.C. 480, there are only three odes written by Pindar that are preserved. The tenth Olympian Ode was written in honour of the victory of Agesidamus, an Epizephyrian Locrian in the boys' boxing-match, B.C. 484. The ode is one of those which were composed and sung on the spot. It is brief, and consists mainly of a promise to compose a more elaborate work in the future. The promise was, after an uncertain interval, and probably not before B.C. 476, redeemed in the eleventh Olympian Ode. In the latter ode Pindar acknowledges his debt, praises Agesidamus and his trainer, and says (86–90), "Even as a son by his lawful wife is welcome to a father, who hath now travelled to the other side of youth, and maketh his soul warm with love—for wealth that must fall to a strange owner from without is most hateful to a dying man—so also, Agesidamus, when a man who hath done honourable deeds goeth unsung to the house of Hades, this man hath spent vain breath and won but brief gladness for his toil." But Pindar's song is washed along as the rolling pebble is by the wave, as he himself says (10), and from the victor in the Olympian games the poet turns to the games themselves and tells the mythical story of their institution. According to this account, Heracles having been cheated of the reward promised him by Augeas for cleansing his stables, proceeded to take vengeance, and Augeas "saw his rich native land, his own city, beneath fierce fire and iron blows sink down into the deep moat of calamity." Augeas himself was slain. "Of strife against stronger powers," says Pindar in one of the gnomes that he is famous for, "it is hard to be rid." After his victory, Heracles gathered together his host at Pisa, by the ancient tomb of Pelops, made offerings from the spoil and held the first Olympian games.

The third ode, which falls between the battles of Marathon and Salamis, is the fifth Nemean. It was composed in honour of Pytheas of Ægina, winner in the boys' pankration at the Nemean games. The kernel of the ode is the favour which the gods showed to the Æacidæ, the patron heroes of Ægina.

Having thus brought the victor into connection with the heroes who before him brought glory to Ægina, Pindar proceeds to select from the myths connected with the Æacidæ one which was told of Peleus, the eldest of the sons of Æacus, and which conveyed the moral lesson which is to be found in most of Pindar's odes. The moral value of athletic training is the self-control which it necessitates; and the story which Pindar relates of the continence of Peleus, and his reward in gaining Thetis for his wife, evidently means that the self-control which Pytheas had exercised as a boy, with the glorious reward of victory, was equally necessary throughout life, and equally certain to meet with a fitting return. Apart, however, from the myth and the moral which constitute the substance of the ode, the introduction is interesting as showing the function of odes of victory in Greek life. A triumph in the national games not only brought honour and joy to the victor and to his city; it was also a mark of the favour of the gods, for it was by their goodwill alone so great a glory could be bestowed. The commemoration, therefore, of this act of divine favour was a religious duty, and claimed the services of the arts. Sculpture and poetry vied in giving expression to this sentiment of obligation to the gods and of public rejoicing. But poetry, Pindar says in the introduction to this ode, has a wider range than sculpture, for poetry travels everywhere. "No statuary I, that I should fashion images to rest idly on their pedestals; nay, but by every trading ship and plying boat forth from Ægina fare, sweet song of mine, and bear abroad the news, how that Lampon's son, the strong-limbed Pytheas, hath won at Nemea the pankratiast's crown, while on his cheeks he showeth not as yet the vine-bloom's mother, mellowing midsummer."

In the odes composed between the battles of Marathon and Salamis no mention occurs of the services of Athens to Greece in the Persian wars; and it is probable that Pindar's Theban feeling prevented him from recognising—what perhaps was not then generally recognised—how great these services were. But some time after the battle of Salamis—how long after, it is difficult to say—he did realise the magnitude of the danger which had been averted from Greece, and the pity of it that Thebes had had no share in the glory of patriotic self-sacrifice. In the seventh Isthmian Ode he alludes to the grief thus caused to him: "I, albeit heavy at heart, am bidden to call upon the golden Muse. Yea, since we are come forth from our sore troubles, let us not fall into the desolation of crownlessness, neither nurse our griefs; but having ease from our ills that are

past mending, we will set some pleasant thing before the people, though it follow hard on pain: inasmuch as some god hath put away from us the Tantalus-stone that hung above our heads, a curse intolerable to Hellas."

At the time of the battle of Salamis, Pindar was about forty years of age. He was then entering on the second period of his literary career, and his reputation was spreading beyond the seas to the farthest colonies of Greece. Even before this he had received commissions from Sicily, and his name, and to a certain extent his works, must have been known there. But now we find him writing odes for the king of Cyrene, and for other inhabitants of that distant colony. Indeed, it is inferred from these odes that Pindar himself travelled to Cyrene. However this may be, it seems beyond reasonable doubt that Pindar visited Sicily, and stayed for a long time in the island. Of the forty-four odes of victory which have come down to us, fourteen were composed for Sicilian victors. With Hiero, tyrant of Syracuse, Pindar seems to have been on terms of some intimacy. The odes in his honour (O. 1, P. 1, 2, 3) reveal a close acquaintance with the private affairs as well as the public policy of the tyrant. But Pindar's acquaintance with Sicily was not confined to the court of Syracuse; he seems to have been known in Akragas (O. 2. 3, P. 6. 12, I. 2), Camarina (O. 4. 5), and Himera (O. 12). Next to Sicily, Ægina fills the most important place in Pindar's epinikia or odes of victory. One fourth of the odes have to do with Æginetan victors; and Pindar seems to have had an especial affection for the place. He calls it "the common light of all, which aideth the stranger with justice;" the place "where saviour Themis, who sitteth in judgment by Zeus, the stranger's succour, is honoured more than anywhere else among men." "From the beginning is her fame perfect, for she is sung of as the nurse of heroes, foremost in many games and in violent fights; and in her mortal men also is she pre-eminent." We find Pindar's odes also in Argos, Locris, Corinth, Orchomenus, Athens, and Thessaly; and we may reasonably suppose that the poet himself visited these places.

To this period of Pindar's literary career belongs the fourth Pythian Ode. This is the finest of all the work of Pindar that has come down to us. The ode is written in honour of the victory gained in the Pythian chariot-race by Arkesilas, king of Cyrene. The myth which forms the substance of the poem is the tale of the expedition of Jason in the Argo in quest of the golden fleece. The connection between the myth and Cyrene is that Cyrene was said to have been colonised by the descen-

dants of Euphemus, one of the Argonauts. The ode appears to have had another object than the ostensible one of celebrating the victory of Arkesilas: it seems to have been designed either to reconcile or to mark the reconciliation of Arkesilas with his kinsman Demophilus, who had taken part in an unsuccessful aristocratical rebellion, and had been exiled in consequence. The ode is on a larger scale than is usual with Pindar; the myth is much longer, and the introduction is proportionately increased. The work is consequently not so close; and as the parts are exhibited in greater magnitude, their relation is more easily discerned than in odes of greater condensation. The narrative is exquisitely beautiful; the scenes which succeed each other in the history of the expedition are painted with all the brilliancy of Pindar's opulent vocabulary, and with a distinctness and reality not surpassed by any other poet. The simplicity of this ode is much assisted by the fact that Pindar devotes himself purely to the business of narrating the myth; whereas in other odes he seeks to cast light on some central idea from all points of view, and to do this he shifts his ground with a rapidity which is dazzling, and before one myth has had time to die away from the retina, as it were, of the mind's eye, he throws on it another and yet another. The greater simplicity of the ode, it should be remarked, is not confined to the clearness of the narrative merely; the metre is not of the highly elaborate character to be found elsewhere in Pindar. It approaches to the hexameter, as the tone of the narrative approaches the style of epic; and we may conjecture with probability that the greater clearness of the narrative and the greater simplicity of the metre point to a much less elaborate musical accompaniment than was designed for the other odes.

The third period of Pindar's literary career extends from the time when he was sixty-five years of age to the date of his death. When he died is uncertain. The tradition usually accepted makes him to be eighty years of age at his death. All that we know is that the fourth Olympian Ode was in all probability composed in B.C. 452, and we cannot be certain that any of the odes we possess belong to a later date, although the eighth Olympian is sometimes considered as having been composed in B.C. 450. To the third period belong, in addition to the two odes just mentioned, the fifth and ninth Olympian Odes and the sixth Isthmian. A decline of power is traced in the odes of this period by some critics, but it is only to a slight extent that Pindar falls below himself.

In addition to the collection of odes of victory that have sur-

vived to our time, Pindar also wrote pæans, parthenia, prosodia or processional songs, hymns, hyporchemata, encomia, drinking-songs, dirges, and dithyrambs; but although we possess fragments of some of these, the fragments are inconsiderable. It is, however, fortunate for the history of Greek literature that we should have specimens of choral lyric such as the odes of victory which have been preserved. They serve to show us the connection of choral lyric with previous *genres* of poetry, and its difference from the chorus of tragedy, and thus they exhibit a link in the development of Greek literature which otherwise would have been lost. As regards the connection with earlier kinds of poetry, we may notice that choral lyric shows that its roots are in epic poetry, not only by the epic words which we find in Pindar, and by the myths and legends which he borrows from the epic poets, but essentially by the fact that it possesses the element of narrative, which constitutes epic poetry and is absent from personal lyrics. But under the term "epic" poetry is included not only narratives such as those of Homer and the Cyclic poets, but also the didactic poetry of Hesiod and his school. With this class of epic also the choral lyric of Pindar has points in common. As a rule, Pindar has a moral lesson to teach even in his odes of victory, and thus he reproduces the spirit and the characteristic of Hesiodic poetry. The epic of Homer and of Hesiod was followed by the personal lyrics of the Æolian poets, Alcæus and Sappho, and in the choral lyric of Pindar we find comprised the leading qualities of personal lyrics as well as of epic and of didactic poetry. Choral does indeed differ from personal lyric in the occasion of its composition and production. The lyric poets of Lesbos were not bound down by times and seasons, but gave expression to their emotions as their emotions prompted them, whereas the composer of choral lyric had to wait for a commission. But the two kinds of lyric poetry have this in common, that in both the poet appears in person, whereas in the Iliad or the Odyssey the poet never brings himself before the reader. In Pindar this self-consciousness is extreme. In virtue of his genius and his divine gift of song, he feels himself the equal of princes; and on the victor, great as victory makes him, he of his goodwill can confer a boon second only to victory itself. Thus, then, the choral lyric of Pindar sums up in itself all that had gone before in Greek poetry. We have now to see in what respect, and why, choral lyric changed when it became incorporated in the drama. In the first place, the element of narrative in this kind of lyric was reduced to a minimum in the drama. Myths

are alluded to rather than narrated in the chorus of tragedy; and the reason is obvious. Narrative in the drama found its place in the speeches of the messengers or other subordinate characters, who in all, or nearly all Greek tragedies, relate the events which, for one reason or another, could not be performed upon the stage. In the next place, choral lyric in becoming the chorus of tragedy lost its personal character. We cannot look to the chorus for the personal views of a Greek tragedian on the moral or other problems raised in his play. The dramatist holds up these problems for investigation in all kinds of lights, from the point of view first of one character, then of another. But his own personal view need never find direct expression; and frequently the chorus simply sums up the action of the play, so far as it has proceeded, and does not express any opinion thereon, or at the most reflects the feelings which the audience may be expected to experience. In fine, the difference between choral lyric and the chorus of tragedy is partly of degree, partly of kind. In degree, because narrative is minimised; in kind, because the opinions expressed are not professedly the poet's. In one respect, however, choral lyric underwent no change when incorporated into the drama. It still remained highly musical. In the tragic chorus, as in choral lyric, the musical accompaniment was at least as important as the words. In both, the function of the words seems to have been, not so much to present a logical series of definite ideas, as to evoke a series of emotions, and to pass before the mind's eye bright and beautiful or impressive images, which succeeded each other too rapidly for analysis, but not too rapidly to produce the feeling designed by the poet.

If, now, in conclusion, we must say a word of Pindar's quality as a poet, it will be to point out that it is in the special function, as just described, of choral lyric that his special excellence consists. Image after image is presented by him to our eyes: from this point and from that, and from yet another, light of the brightest is thrown on the point which he wishes to illumine. To endeavour to discriminate between the effects which thus rapidly succeed each other is to lose the total impression which the whole is intended to convey. Doubtless there always was a thread running through all the ideas contained in an ode; and in many cases the thread by diligent study can even now be distinguished; but it seems improbable that the audience, whose attention was claimed by the music as well as the words, either were able or were expected by Pindar to analyse logically the ode as they heard it. The ideas and emotions aroused in

the audience were as satisfactory, but probably not more definite, than those aroused by music. The two chief qualities of Pindar's poetry are rapidity and radiance. In his desire to illustrate his thought from every point of view, he not only flashes from one illustration to another before the mind of the hearer has wholly taken in the force of the first; but within a single sentence he fuses two conceptions, whose joint effect is more rapid and more dazzling than that which would be produced by their separate enunciation. As for the radiance of his poetry, it is seen not only in his fondness for epithets of brightness and effulgence, but in the vividness and persistency with which the images of the persons and things described by him remain on the mind's eye; and we cannot conclude better than by quoting from the fourth Pythian as an illustration the description of Jason: "So in the fulness of time he came, wielding two spears, a wondrous man; and the vesture that was upon him was twofold, the garb of the Magnetes' country close fitting to his splendid limbs, but above he wore leopard-skin to turn the hissing showers; nor were the bright locks of his hair shorn from him, but over all his back ran rippling down. Swiftly he went straight on, and took his stand, making trial of his dauntless soul, in the market-place when the multitude was full."

Connected with Pindar are the names of Myrtis and Corinna. The former is said to have been born at Anthedon in Bœotia. We should not even know that she composed lyric poetry, were it not that Corinna has recorded the fact that she competed against Pindar. Corinna, born in Tanagra, is said, like Pindar, to have been taught by Myrtis. She too competed against Pindar, and is said to have five times defeated him for the prize—a result which Pausanias conjectures to have been due to the fact that she composed in the local dialect, while Pindar employed Doric. Here we may mention the name of some other poetesses. Telesilla of Argos, who lived at the end of the sixth century B.C., not only composed verses, but took up arms against the Spartans when they invaded Argos under Cleomenes. Praxilla of Sicyon, who flourished about B.C. 450, composed dithyrambs, lyric poetry, a small epic, gave her name to two kinds of metre, and was especially distinguished for her drinking-songs or skolia, which were extremely popular in Athens. Clitagora flourished between B.C. 560 and B.C. 527, and was famous for a skolion she composed. Other poetesses, whose dates are unknown, and who may or may not belong to the classical period, are Charixena, Eriphanis, Salpe, Myia, Clito, Learchis, Menarchis, Telarchis, Mystis, Praxigoris, and Arignota.

With Pindar choral lyric reached its highest development; after him not only was there no poet, except Bacchylides, who cultivated all kinds of lyric poetry, but many kinds, *e.g.* parthenia, prosodia, hyporchemata, ceased to be cultivated at all, while others, such as pæans and hymns, were comparatively neglected. Dithyrambs alone continued to be cultivated, but in such a way as shows that the period of choral lyric is past. Pindar had allowed the musical accompaniment quite its full importance, but the dithyrambic poets of the next generation made the music of more importance than the words. The clearest sign of the decay of choral lyric is the fact that the dithyramb was no longer true to its type, but sought to produce effects by means properly peculiar to a distinct branch of art, the drama; just as the decay of the drama was indicated by the tendency to oratorical effects in the plays of Euripides. The symptoms of decay in the dithyramb were first noticeable in Melanippides of Melos, in Democritus of Chios and Crexus, contemporaries of Pindar. During the Peloponnesian war, the most celebrated composer of dithyrambs was the younger Melanippides, who bought Philoxenus of Cythera as a slave, taught him lyric, and saw him achieve success in dithyrambs. Contemporary with the younger Melanippides was Phrynis of Mytilene in Lesbos, who gained victories in the dithyramb contests at the Panathenæa. After Melanippides, Cinesias became the favourite dithyramb writer at Athens, and was much attacked by the comedians. Cinesias was succeeded by Timotheus of Miletus, who visited the court of Archelaus in Macedonia, but spent most of his time in Athens. He seems to have possessed greater talent than any of these later dithyrambic poets. To Athens also were attracted Polyeidus, Kekeides, Licymnius of Chios, Telestes of Selinus, Ariphron of Sicyon, Anaxandrides of Kaneiros, Theodoridas of Syracuse and Argas, who all competed at various times for the dithyramb prize.

BOOK III.

THE DRAMA.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY TRAGEDY.

"Both tragedy and comedy were originally improvisations. The former had its origin with the choir-masters of the dithyramb, the latter with those of the phallic hymns, which even now in many cities remain in use. Tragedy gradually advanced by such successive improvements as were most obvious, and, after many changes, reposed at length when it had acquired its proper form. The number of actors Æschylus first advanced from one to two; he abridged the chorus, and gave the dialogue the principal rôle. Sophocles introduced three actors and stage decorations. Further, the originally short fables acquired a proper magnitude, and the number of episodes was increased. As tragedy developed from the satyric drama, it was late before it threw off comic language and assumed its proper dignity. Iambics displaced trochaic tetrameters; for originally trochaics were used because tragedy, like the satyric drama, was composed for dancing. But when dialogue was introduced, nature pointed out the appropriate metre; for of all metres the iambic is the most colloquial."

This is what Aristotle says[1] of the origin and early history of the drama, and it is almost all we know on the subject. From this it would seem that in the earliest stage of tragedy, the author of the dithyramb, who was also the choir-master, during a pause between one part of the dithyramb and the next, came forward and improvised a short story, relating probably to some adventure of the god Dionysus, in whose honour the dithyramb was being performed. This story was told in trochaic verse, contained much that was comic, involved a good deal of

[1] *Poetics*, 4. 11–14.

dancing, and was accompanied by music. At first the choirmaster appeared only once during the dithyramb in his character of improvisatore, but in course of time such "episodes' became more numerous. At first, too, the poet simply recited his story, probably to the accompaniment of sympathetic and explanatory gestures, and dancing on the part of the satyr-chorus, which had come to be associated with the dithyramb. Even thus the actor might, by retiring during the dithyramb and changing his dress, appear at several times in various characters, *e.g.* as a hero reciting what he had done, or as a messenger reciting what had been done, and thus produce an effect not unlike that of a whole play. But it could not have been long before the poet conceived the idea of addressing himself to and provoking replies from the chorus; thus dialogue naturally arose, and when it did, the metre naturally changed from trochaics to iambics.

It will be noticed that Aristotle in his account of the origin of tragedy does not mention Thespis, to whom the introduction of an actor, and consequently the "invention" of tragedy, is usually ascribed.[1] Whether Aristotle was acquainted with this view and (as in that case his silence would show) tacitly rejected it, or whether the view only originated after Aristotle's time, is hard to say. The earliest reference to it that we have is in the pseudo-Platonic *Minos*, which was not composed until after the death of Aristotle. There[2] we have the statement that "tragedy did not, as people think, originate with Thespis or Phrynichus," which implies that some people at the time of the writing of the *Minos* ascribed the invention of tragedy to Thespis. But if the evidence in the possession of Aristotle did not lead him to ascribe the introduction of an actor, and subsequently of dialogue, to Thespis, we may infer that the claims made for Thespis had no strong basis; in which inference we are confirmed by a passage in the grammarian Pollux,[3] which expressly mentions the existence of dialogue before Thespis. The ascription of the "invention" of tragedy to Thespis was

[1] Horace, A.P. 285:—

"Ignotum tragicæ genus invenisse Camœnæ
Dicitur, et plaustris vexisse poemata Thespis,
Quæ canerent agerentque peruncti fœcibus ora."

The "waggons" belong to the early history of comedy, which Horace mixes up with that of tragedy.

[2] 321 A, ἡ δὲ τραγῳδία ἐστὶ παλαιὸν ἐνθάδε, οὐχ ὡς οἴονται ἀπὸ Θέσπιδος ἀρξαμένη, οὐδ' ἀπὸ Φρυνίχου.

[3] iv. 123, ἐλεὸς δ' ἦν τράπεζα ἀρχαία ἐφ' ἣν πρὸ Θέσπιδος εἷς τις ἀναβὰς τοῖς χορευταῖς ἀπεκρίνατο.

probably due to the difficulty which the Greeks had in understanding the action of a process, and their consequent tendency to ascribe all things to the intentional action of persons. All good laws were at Athens ascribed to Solon; the constitution of Sparta, the result of a process of external pressure operating during many generations, was ascribed to Lycurgus; and so the invention of tragedy was ascribed to Thespis. Thespis must have rendered considerable services to tragedy to have been credited with its invention. but what these services were we do not know. The orator Themistius [1] (who lived at Constantinople and flourished about A.D. 360) refers to Aristotle as saying that Thespis invented prologue and rhesis; but no such passage occurs in the *Poetics*, and although possibly Themistius may be referring to some now lost work of Aristotle, *e.g.* that *On Poets*, it is more probable that here, as elsewhere, he is inaccurate, and that the quotation does not come from Aristotle. In any case, it is difficult to know what the statement means; for although Thespis may have been the first poet who appeared before the audience before the dithyramb began, and thus may be said to have invented the prologue, the statement that he invented the rhesis (*i.e.* a long passage of iambics delivered by the actor, and spoken, not sung) is hard to understand. If it refers to the improvised recitations of the earliest choirmasters, or if it refers to the subsequent introduction of spoken iambics in the place of the melic trochaics, it is hard to reconcile with the passage quoted above from the *Poetics*, which does not ascribe either invention to Thespis.

The character of the drama of Thespis must be inferred from the fact that it was neither tragedy nor satyric drama, but the common ancestor from which both these forms of dramatic representation were shortly to be evolved. The chorus consisted of satyrs,[2] but the argument of the play was not therefore always merry.[3] The *Pentheus*, from its title, could hardly have been anything but tragic, and the fact that tragedy was descended from the drama of Thespis implies that it contained the elements of tragedy.

Pratinas of Phlius (B.C. 500) is said to have invented the

[1] xxvi. 316D, *οὐ προσέχομεν Ἀριστοτέλει ὅτι . . . Θέσπις πρόλογον τε καὶ ῥῆσιν ἐξεῦρεν.*

[2] The fact, however, that Pratinas is said to have invented the satyric drama may imply that Thespis gave up the chorus of satyrs, and that Pratinas reintroduced them.

[3] Bentley (*Opuscula*, 285) thought otherwise. But the view given in the text is also taken by Dahlmann (*Primordia*, 8), Jacob (*Quæst. Soph.* 112), Schneider (*Origin. T. G.* 54), Welcker (*Nachl.* 256), and Hermann (*Opusc.* vii. 213).

satyric drama, and his fame as a writer of this kind of play survived till the time of Pausanias. Of him we have no further information, but we may consider that after his time tragedy was distinguished from the satyric drama, and that the chorus of satyrs was confined to the latter kind of play, while to tragedy were appropriated the more dignified qualities now associated with it.

Satyric drama resembled tragedy, inasmuch as its figures were those of tragedy, and their characters were drawn with much the same majesty and in the same outlines as those of tragedy. But the subjects of the satyric drama were either of a lighter kind, dealing with love and wine, in order to be in keeping with the chorus of satyrs, or, if deeds of blood were introduced, they were, like the blinding of Polyphemus, such as would rather enliven than sadden the audience. Again, the centre of a Greek drama was the chorus, and the character of the chorus determined the character of the play. As the traditional conception of the satyrs was that of an idle and mischievous race, it would be obviously out of place to expect from such a chorus any serious reflections, or through such a chorus any of the poet's profounder speculations. Between the satyric chorus and the hero there could be no confidences, or only those of a nature adapted to the character of the satyrs. The satyric drama proper, with its playful chorus, its comic Silenus, and cheerful termination, was unlike tragedy in many respects, but it was also unlike comedy. The scene of a satyric drama was always laid in the country, to suit the satyr-chorus. Its incidents were often grave, and it was broadly distinguished from comedy by containing nothing which approached to parody.

The only satyric drama which has come down to us is the *Cyclops* by Euripides. The subject of the play is, as the name indicates, the blinding of Polyphemus, the Cyclops, by Odysseus. The scene in which Polyphemus is made drunk by Odysseus before being blinded is amusing, though rather long, and the character of Silenus and of the satyrs is also amusing. But the humour is throughout quiet and somewhat suppressed, so we are inclined to believe that this is not a good specimen of the satyric drama. The little information which ancient writers give us on the satyric dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles leads to the inference that their plays, in this kind, were much more boisterous, contained more horse-play, and were somewhat coarse.

Pratinas is sometimes said to have invented the satyric drama. This, however, must not be taken to mean that he

was the first dramatist to introduce a chorus of satyrs into a play. The tradition of antiquity represents the satyr-drama of Pratinas rather as the revival of an older than the introduction of a more advanced form of drama. Of satyric drama, however, as a play which was attached to a tragedy or tragedies, and could not be performed independently, Pratinas may be regarded as the inventor. Pratinas competed with Æschylus and Chœrilus in B.C. 500, and his son Aristias, who produced some of his father's satyr-dramas, was second to Æschylus in the competition of B.C. 468. According to Pausanias, Æschylus alone wrote better satyr-dramas than Pratinas and Aristias.

But, to return to tragedy, Phrynichus, the tragic poet (B.C. 500), was a man of greater mark. Here we have a man whose boldness and originality were such that they betray themselves even in the very few facts known to us about him, and to whose originality Greek tragedy very probably owed much of the progress it made before the time of Æschylus. He ventured not only to abandon the myths connected with Dionysus, but to abandon myths altogether, and to take for the subjects of at least some of his plays historical events. In one of his tragedies entitled the *Taking of Miletus*, he so painfully affected his audience that (according to Herodotus) the Athenians inflicted a fine on him for reminding them so vividly of the misfortunes of a friendly state.

Subsequently he was more fortunate. He selected the defeat of the Persians as the subject of his *Phenician Women*. Plutarch says, on the authority of an inscription, that Phrynichus won the tragic prize in B.C. 476, and that Themistocles was his choregus. This it has been supposed was the occasion on which the *Phenician Women* was produced, and it is not impossible. Be this as it may, Phrynichus' treatment of the subject shows genuine artistic power. The chorus consisted of Phenician women,[1] and the scene was laid in Persia. Phrynichus thus avoided the dangers that would have attended any attempt to represent on the stage events at which many of his audience

[1] Inasmuch, however, as οἱ τῆς ἀρχῆς παρέδροι probably appeared in this play, it has been inferred that Phrynichus subdivided the chorus, and had, in fact, two choruses, one of Phenician women, the other of Persian elders. That the chorus consisted, in Phrynichus' time, of fifty choreutæ (the number of Arion's cyclian dithyrambic chorus) is inferred from the fact that one of his plays was entitled the *Danaïdes*, whose traditional number was fifty. From these two inferences we may further gather that it was to this subdivision that the reduction of the number of the choreutæ to twelve (the number in Æschylus) was due. It has also been conjectured that the reduction is connected with the introduction of the tetralogy, the chorus of fifty being divided between the four plays.

had probably been present, while he invested those events with the poetry and interest attaching to a representation conceived from a new and impressive point of view. By introducing the news of the Persian defeat at an early period in the play. he lost the interest of expectation which might have pervaded the tragedy; but this was due rather to the undeveloped state of the drama in his time than to any fault of the author.

Removed as he was so little from the dithyrambic origin of tragedy, it was natural that Phrynichus should display more command of the lyric element than of the economy of the drama. Accordingly the *Phenician Women* consisted mainly of lamentations over the Persian defeat, uttered probably by Atossa and Xerxes. The audience were agreeably and delicately flattered, and the poet gained an opportunity of displaying his peculiar powers.

It is a tribute to the genius of Phrynichus that Æschylus, when he subsequently took up the same subject in his *Persians*, adhered in several important points to the treatment of his predecessor. It is also interesting to notice that in the *Phenician Women* we observe the counter-influence of Æschylus on Phrynichus. The elder poet in this play avails himself of his junior's innovation by introducing a second actor. This must have conduced to freedom in the action of the play, though precisely to what extent it did so we are not in a position to infer.

But Phrynichus not only availed himself of the innovations of others, he was himself an innovator. He not only developed the music and the dances[1] of the drama. but also introduced for the first time female characters on the stage. He did this not only in the *Phenician Women*, but also (as is indicated by the titles of the plays) in the *Women of Pleuron*, the *Daughters of Danäus*, and the *Alcestis*.

After B.C. 476 we hear no more of Phrynichus, and the earliest date at which he is mentioned as winning the tragic prize is B.C. 511. His contemporary, Chœrilus, is said to have appeared before the public as early as B.C. 524, and to have lived to a great age. We are not able, however, to assign to him any share in the development of tragedy (though he is said to have done something for the costumes of the actors),[2] or to form any opinion of his merits as a dramatist.[3]

[1] Thus in the Πυρρίχαι the chorus probably danced an intricate sort of sword-dance.

[2] Κατά τινας τοῖς προσωπείοις καὶ τῇ σκευῇ τῶν στολῶν ἐπεχείρησε.—Suidas *s. v.* X.

[3] Photius (Patriarch of Constantinople about A.D. 850) quotes a verse



APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I.

METRE, DIALECT, AND DIVISIONS OF TRAGEDY.

ALTHOUGH the drama had its origin in the choral songs in honour of Dionysus, the essence of drama is the dialogue. In that early stage of the drama, when tragedy and the satyric drama were not yet differentiated, and when consequently tragedy proper was not yet marked by the stateliness which afterwards characterised it, the metre of the dialogue was the trochaic tetrameter. With the separation, however, of the satyric element from tragedy there came a change in the metre of the dialogue. Trochaics were probably still the form into which the lively dialogue of the satyrs was thrown; but for the dialogue of tragedy the iambic trimeter was perceived to be the appropriate expression. Iambics are the verses into which the conversation of real life most frequently unintentionally fall, and iambics were the verses into which the conversation of tragedy was instinctively thrown. The tendency to model the dialogue of tragedy on that of life, which displayed itself thus early, continued to develop steadily throughout the history of tragedy. It shows itself partly in the metrical constitution of the verse, and partly in the disposition of the verses. Of all the tragedians, Æschylus observed the strictest rules of versification, and his successors worked with greater freedom, admitting, *e.g.*, with increasing frequency divisions which he avoided. The iambic verse thus, although it grew laxer, came to possess more variety and more movement, and to reflect more directly the emotions of the speakers. The disposition of the verses shows the same growing tendency to lightness and rapidity of action. Set speeches of any considerable length must retard the movement of a play; but the conflict of wills, which is the basis of all tragedy, demands for its adequate representation a duel of words, in which the thrust and parry of argument follow on each other with the rapidity of foils in a fencing-match. Hence the practice, common to all the tragedians but less frequent in Æschylus than in his predecessors, of *stichomuthia*, or dialogues in which each speech consists of one line only. Hence, too, the further process (of which only two instances are to be found in Æschylus, *Sept.* 217 and *P. V.* 980) of dividing a single line between two or even three characters (the portions of a line thus divided received, by a metaphor from wrestling, the name ἀντιλαβαί). Finally may be here mentioned the recurrence of interjections outside the verse altogether, a device adapted for the expression of outbursts of feeling, which is more frequent in Euripides than in Sophocles, and in Sophocles than in Æschylus.

Vivacity and rapidity were not all that was aimed at in the disposition of the iambics of tragedy. Symmetry also was sought after; and as the antistrophe of a chorus corresponds to the strophe, so the iambics which stand connected with the chorus not unfrequently correspond in number. Hence the practice of symmetrical disposition extended to speeches which stand in

from an unknown poet, ἡνίκα μὲν βασιλεὺς ἦν Χοιρίλος ἐν σατύροις (iii. 32), which is sometimes taken to mean that Chœrilus excelled in satyric drama. But the passage is obscure, and, if it were intelligible, not knowing who was the author, we should not know what value to put on the verse as evidence.

no connection with the chorus; and, especially in Euripides, we find that in the set speeches of two contending persons, the number of lines in the reply corresponds exactly to that of the speech to which it is an answer.

The dialect of the chorus is not real but conventional Doric, because the choral odes were originally Doric dithyrambs, and the various kinds of literary composition tended in Greece to adhere to the dialect in which they were first composed. It is in the history of the chorus that we find the explanation of its dialect; and there, too, we find the explanation of its metres. The chorus originated in the worship of Dionysus, and thus it inherited and transmitted to tragedy the numerous kinds of metre which the ingenuity of poets and the approval of the people had stamped as peculiarly adapted for expressing the various emotions roused by the worship of the wine-god. Hymns of praise, processional songs, strains of exaltation or lamentation, had provided for tragedy various metrical systems, the dactylic, anapæstic, trochaic, iambic, iambo-trochaic, choriambic, logaœdic, and cretic. These metres tragedy worked out in its own way, developing some and neglecting others. Trochaic strophes, simple in structure and profound in their effect upon the feelings, gave way, as tragedy developed its own style, before iambic strophes, which adapt themselves more speedily to sudden changes of feeling. A still further result of the tendency thus shown was the introduction—probably by Euripides—of iambo-trochaics, and the cultivation of logaœdic verses largely to the exclusion of other metres. But although some metres were thus specially cultivated by the tragedians the chorus was all the time declining in importance and giving way before the development of the essentially dramatic elements of the drama. Thus the lyrics of the chorus became not only reduced in length, but less carefully composed and less wealthy in variety of metres.

The ode which the chorus sang when it first entered was called the Parodos (Pollux, iv. 108, *ἡ μὲν εἴσοδος τοῦ χοροῦ πάροδος καλεῖται*). Originally it was prefaced by some anapæsts delivered by the Coryphæus or leader of the chorus as it marched in. Then the melic part was sung by the whole chorus grouped round the altar or thymele in the middle of the orchestra. After that, the chorus took its proper place between the thymele and the stage. This dated from the time before tragedy, when the dithyramb was sung round the altar of Dionysus in honour of the god. But in course of time the anapæsts were dropped, and a piece of music substituted in their place. The chorus marched straight to its place in the orchestra, and there—not round the altar—sang the strophe and antistrophe of which the melic was composed. In the *Persians*, the *Suppliants*, and the *Rhesus*, the play opens with the parodos; but in all the other plays we possess, the parodos is preceded by a speech or speeches from one or more of the actors, which speech or speeches are called the Prologue. The introduction of a prologue is ascribed to Thespis in a passage professing to be quoted from Aristotle (Themistius, xxvi. p. 382. 17, *οὐ προσέχομεν τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει ὅτι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὁ χορὸς εἰσιὼν ᾖδεν εἰς τοὺς θεούς, Θέσπις δὲ πρόλογόν τε καὶ ῥῆσιν ἐξεῦρεν*). In the *Ajax*, the *Alcestis*, and the *Helena*, the chorus leaves the theatre in the middle of the play (*e.g.* in order that Ajax may kill himself); its re-entry was called Epiparodos (Pollux, iv. 108, *ἡ δὲ κατὰ χρείαν ἔξοδος ὡς πάλιν εἰσιόντων μετάστασις, ἡ δὲ μετὰ ταύτην εἴσοδος ἐπιπάροδος*).

The other songs of the chorus were called Stasima, because they were sung by the chorus, not



whilst entering or at the altar, but when standing in its usual place in the orchestra. The number of stasima was usually four, thus dividing the play into five parts. Three of these parts were called Episodes, *i.e.* the three which were both preceded and followed by a stasimon, for the prologue and the exodos were not called episodes. The name "episode" goes back to the time when an actor was introduced to give the chorus breathing-time. The chorus first made its entrance, εἴσοδος, sang its dithyramb, and then the actor made his appearance, ἐπεισόδιον. Thence the name episode was extended to all that occurred between two stasima. Normally the stasimon summarises and comments on that part of the action of the play which precedes it, but in Euripides it frequently bears no relation to it: the chorus has become as foreign to the drama as the actor originally was to the dithyramb.

We have considered those parts of a Greek tragedy which are peculiar to the chorus, and those which are peculiar to the actors: we now have to examine those which arise from communication between the chorus and the actors. With respect to ordinary dialogue between an actor and the leader of the chorus, there is nothing to add to what we have said as to dialogue between the actors: it is in iambics and in conventional old Attic. But when the actors enter into the melic (*i.e.* the part sung) of the tragedy, there arise new divisions of the play. First we have the Commos: the commos is a lyric of lamentation. In metre and dialect it resembles the other lyrics of the chorus, but it differs from them in that, as the actors take part in it, it is dramatic. The stasima accompany, the commi partake in the action of the play. Next we have the songs from the stage (τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς). When once the dramatic element had been allowed in the commos to have a share in the lyrics, it was inevitable that it should encroach; and the result was the songs from the stage, which were lyrics sung by the actors alone, either by several (τὰ ἀμοιβαῖα) or by one, solo (μονῳδία). Eventually the songs from the stage became, as lyrics, more important even than the chorus, and Euripides carried the composition of monodies to its greatest height.

The musical instrument used in the theatre was the flute; not so much, as is sometimes said, because the penetrating notes of this instrument were needed if the music was to be heard all over the theatre, but probably because of the traditional connection of the flute with ecstatic worship, such, *e.g.* as that of Cybele, in connection with which the Greeks made their first acquaintance with the flute. There seem to be no grounds for thinking that the iambic trimeter of tragedy or of comedy was delivered in a sort of recitative to the accompaniment of the flute; nor is there any evidence that the trochaic tetrameter was accompanied in tragedy, though perhaps it was in comedy. How the anapæsts were delivered is uncertain. When they formed part of the parodos of tragedy they must have been sung, and perhaps were always sung. On the other hand, when they were used conversationally in comedy, they must have been spoken.

The lines of the dramatic poet, however, were accompanied not only by music but also by dancing. With the vivacity of the Southern temperament, the Greeks found dancing as natural an outlet for the feelings as song, and before the drama rose there existed a large number of dances of the most various kinds. Many of these were adopted by the drama, and modified by it to its own requirements. These varied in character from the emmeleia, the most stately of the dances in tragedy, to the indecent

cordax of comedy. To associate dancing with tragedy is hard for us at the present time; but we may understand it if we reflect that the chorus during the action of the play could not stand cold and impassive, but must by some byplay have expressed the feelings supposed to be aroused by the events of the drama; and this expression of feeling by gesture and attitude, by the movements and the grouping of the choreutæ, would naturally among the Greeks tend to take harmonious and recurring forms, and thus be "dancing." In this respect, as in others, less and less attention was paid to the chorus as the drama developed. Pratinas and Phrynichus made much more of the dances of the chorus than did Sophocles and Euripides.

CHAPTER II.

ÆSCHYLUS.

THE facts of Æschylus' life which are known to us are unfortunately insignificant, alike in number and in meaning. They tell us little of his mental growth or of his artistic development. He was born B.C. 525 and died B.C. 456. These dates imply that the whole of the mature life of Æschylus fell in the period of the Persian wars, and so came under the influence of all the feelings which the great events of that period caused or intensified among the Greeks. Before these wars the Greeks were conscious that they were one people. Their community of language, customs, and religion was an internal force and cohesion which resulted in a Pan-Hellenic sentiment. But the consciousness of unity thus generated might have remained sterile had not hostile pressure by the Persian power brought it into operation, and converted the mere barren consciousness into a sentiment of Pan-Hellenism fruitful both in the world of action and the world of thought. In later times, as the fear of the Persian passed away, the feeling of Pan-Hellenism again ceased to be operative. But Æschylus was exposed to the full strength of the sentiment, and his view of things was much influenced by it. He was exposed to it not merely as a Greek, but as a citizen of that state in which the feeling was deepest. Athens profited by the sentiment of nationality among the Greeks at this time, not because she was looked upon, as was Sparta, as the head of the Greeks, but in that she made sacrifices for the common interests and the liberty of Hellas unparalleled in Greek history. Also Æschylus' interest in the public events of his time was not merely that of a spectator—philosophical or political—or that of a historian, but that of an actor. He fought

with conspicuous courage at Marathon, at Platæa, and at Salamis. As one of those Athenians who were said (inaccurately) to be the first Greeks that dared to even look upon the Persians, he had risked his life at Marathon and had sacrificed his home before Salamis, and had thereby shown that he, like his fellow-citizens, felt and was proud of his nationality as a Hellene. And he shows in his poetry the effect which the overthrow of the Persian had upon his religious views. To all Greeks the hand of the gods was clearly visible in the Persian defeat. To Herodotus it was only the greatest of many instances of the Nemesis which visited the too-powerful. To Æschylus it was a confirmation of the awful might of the gods and the nothingness of the mightiest of men. That the gods showed their strength at Marathon and at Salamis was a national conviction, of which Æschylus, least of all men, could escape the effects. Born at Eleusis, he must from his earliest years have been moved by the mysterious processions he beheld there, and still more by the mystery of the rites which he was not yet permitted to see. Sprung, too, of a noble family which was connected with the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, he must have felt the effect of family traditions fitted to develop his speculations on the might and majesty of the gods. That his family was noble and had taken an energetic part in politics, and that his brother met a glorious death at Marathon, are facts which go to account for the bold and powerful character of the poet, but otherwise throw no light on his life or work.

Æschylus died in Sicily, but whether he paid only one visit or more to that island, there is no evidence to show. If, as is assumed with some probability, he went there at the invitation of Hiero, this must have happened before Hiero's death in B.C. 467. But as he lived eleven years longer, and during this period several of his plays were produced on the Athenian stage, it has been supposed that he made at least two, perhaps three, journeys to Sicily. We do not know, however, that it was at Hiero's invitation he went to Sicily; while, if Aristophanes could get his comedies produced by friends, perhaps the tragedies of Æschylus could also be put on the stage in the author's absence. That Æschylus composed a play, the *Women of Ætna*, in celebration of, or suggested by, the foundation of the town Ætna in B.C. 476, leaves it quite unsettled whether he was in Sicily immediately after that date; nor does the prophecy in the *Prometheus Bound* (372) of an eruption of Ætna prove that he witnessed the eruption of B.C. 475 (or perhaps B.C. 479). And although the poet's evident familiarity with

fishing seems to indicate familiarity with the sea, we are not thereby warranted in assuming, as is sometimes done, that he went three times to Sicily.

More interesting are the speculations as to the cause of the poet's going to Sicily. It has been generally assumed that he did not leave Athens willingly, and explanations, some discreditable to the Athenians, some discreditable to Æschylus, have been put forward in ancient, and accepted in modern times, but all without evidence. Some casual words of Aristotle (*N. E.* III. ii.) make it probable that he was accused of revealing certain of the religious mysteries. How the accusation was made, and what was the issue, are alike unknown, and that it led to his retiring to Sicily there is nothing to show. That Æschylus was banished no one asserts; and if he chose to visit Sicily, it does not follow that he was disgusted with his treatment at Athens. Fifty-two of his plays are said to have received prizes at Athens, and this evinces the estimation in which he was held there. On the other hand, we know that the people of Sicily had an enthusiasm for dramatic poetry so great that many captive Athenians after the Sicilian expedition owed their release to their ability to recite from Euripides. This enthusiasm, and the existence in Sicily of a court which included Simonides, Epicharmus, and Pindar among its guests, may be deemed in themselves sufficient to account for the journey to Sicily.

Æschylus' attitude towards the politics of his day has been the subject of much discussion. The *Eumenides* was produced in B C. 458, only two years before his death, and at a time of great political excitement in Athens. The oligarchical party had just been defeated on both their foreign and their home policy. Their foreign policy was alliance with Sparta. Alliance with an oligarchical state was the natural policy for the oligarchical party, and, further, was supposed to be necessary for those offensive operations against Persia which Cimon conducted with so much energy and success. The home policy of the party consisted in opposing such changes in the constitution as would give more power to the people, and at this time also consisted particularly in supporting the powers and privileges of the Areopagus against the attacks of the democratic party. Shortly before the production of the *Eumenides*, the Spartans had first requested the assistance of the Athenians against a revolt of the Helots, and had then dismissed the Athenians in an insulting manner. Such indignation was thereon felt in Athens, that the democratic party were enabled to break off the

alliance with Sparta, and to substitute for it an alliance with Argos, the enemy of Sparta. At about the same time, the democrats under Ephialtes succeeded in depriving the Areopagus of its political powers, leaving to it only the right of trying cases of homicide.[1]

It was at this time that Æschylus chose to present, in the *Eumenides*, his view on the foundations and functions of the Areopagus. We might infer his views from individual passages of the play, but it is safer to rely upon its entire plot. According to the legend adopted by Æschylus, Clytemestra,[2] having murdered her husband, Agamemnon, is, in accordance with the express command of Apollo, herself put to death by her son Orestes. For killing his mother, Orestes is claimed by the Furies or Erinyes, but is protected by Apollo. Eventually the conflicting claims of the Erinyes and Apollo are referred to Athene, who institutes the court of the Areopagus for the purpose of deciding between them, and Orestes is acquitted. The fate of Orestes is the least important part of the *Eumenides*. In this, as in other dramas of Æschylus, the interest centres in a great problem having a religious and a moral issue. The climax of the play is, not the release of Orestes, but the solution of the religious problem. With the early Greeks, as with other primitive peoples, the nearest relative of a murdered man was bound to avenge him. This duty involved the further shedding of blood, that is to say, the fulfilment of a moral obligation results in the violation of a moral law. These conflicting duties (the moral side of the problem), Æschylus represents as reconciled by the institution of a court, the Areopagus, which shall take upon itself the decision of questions touching homicide. The religious problem is to reconcile the commands of Apollo, the god of vengeance and the representative of the younger dynasty of gods, with the claims of the Erinyes, who represent the older gods, and are the punishers of those who spill human blood. So far as these conflicting claims are not reconciled by the institution of the Areopagus, they are harmonised by the worship promised in the play to the Erinyes, whose cult was, as a matter of fact, connected with the Areopagus, and is explained by Æschylus as a compensation for any slight to their powers which might conceivably be regarded as resulting from the foundation of the court of the Areopagus.

[1] Philochorus in the *Lexicon Cantab.* 674. 6: Ἐφιάλτης μόνα κατέλιπε τῇ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλῇ τὰ ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος.

[2] Inscriptions and the best MSS. spell the name Κλυταιμήστρα, which is supported by the Latin form, *Clytemestra*. See *Philol. Wochenschrift*, vi. 291.

The *Eumenides* is sometimes said to be a panegyric on the Areopagus, and sometimes even to have been a call to all good men to join in preserving to it the political powers which it had long exercised. But it is probable that the *Eumenides* was produced after the reforms of Ephialtes; and as Æschylus represents the Areopagus to have been founded to try cases of homicide, the very class of cases which Ephialtes left to it, it is more reasonable to regard the play as having been intended to reconcile those who strove for the preservation of the political powers of the Areopagus to the new state of things, which Æschylus shows to be in harmony with the original nature of the court. This view receives some support from the fact that the alliance with Argos, to which the oligarchical party was opposed, is also shown by Æschylus (727 *et seq.*) to be in harmony with tradition, myth, and religion.

In the history of the Greek drama our guiding clue throughout is the changing position of the chorus. It was out of the chorus of Dionysus that the drama was developed, and even when an actor had been assigned a part in this form of the worship of Dionysus, his share was relatively much smaller than that of the chorus. A second and a third actor were added, and the functions of the chorus were correspondingly reduced in extent and importance, until in the drama of Euripides the chorus has no organic relation to the play, but becomes a mere customary incident, which, being meaningless, has become little better than a hindrance. By the aid of this clue we may trace not only the general history of the drama, but the artistic development of that of Æschylus. The introduction of a second actor was his work; it is, however, probable that such a change would not be made by Æschylus in the first, or even the second play he wrote, but only when he had had some experience in composition, and had come to feel the need of such a change, and the advantages which it would bring. Of the first stage of his work, when the whole action of the play was carried on between the chorus and a single actor, we have nothing left; no play, no fragment of one, and not even the name, so far as we know, of a play. Nor are the seven extant plays all capable of being played by two actors; the so-called trilogy, consisting of the *Agamemnon*, the *Choephori*, and the *Eumenides*, requires three actors; and although the *Prometheus Bound* might, by the aid of a supernumerary, be played by means of two actors only, it was more probably performed by three. The introduction of a third actor was the work of Sophocles. The plays of Æschylus above mentioned must, therefore, be later in time than this innovation

by Sophocles, and are the latest works by Æschylus which we possess. The three remaining works, the *Persians*, the *Seven against Thebes*, and the *Suppliants*, therefore most probably belong to the period after Æschylus used one actor and before he advanced under the influence of Sophocles to the use of three.

In the history of literature the *Persians* is interesting as showing how gradual was the development of the Greek drama, and how far even genius such as that of Æschylus is fettered by the usage of the time. The *Persians* is indeed the only historical drama in Greek literature which we possess, but it was not the only one written. The *Phenician Women* of Phrynichus was on the same subject as the *Persians*, and Æschylus has borrowed from his predecessor's play. In the *Phenician Women* the scene was laid in Persia, with true artistic feeling; for, properly to view the exploit of Hellas some perspective was necessary: that of time was inapplicable, and that of distance was substituted; and Æschylus showed his power as an artist in borrowing this mode of treating the subject from Phrynichus.

The slowness of the early growth of the drama is shown by the *Persians* in another respect. In the early days of the Greek drama only two kinds of poetry were known to the Greeks—the epic, in which a story was told, and the lyric, in which the emotions of the poet were expressed. The Greeks had not the literature of a more advanced nation before them from which to learn that the essence of the drama is that the actions which narrative poetry relates should, in a play, be actually done by the actors in the view of the spectators. The Greek dramatists were not only without this knowledge, but they did not even rapidly attain to it. They for some time modelled their dramatic works on the only two kinds of poetry with which they had any acquaintance, the epic and the lyric. Thus the real subject of the *Persians* is the conflict of Xerxes with the Greeks; but no attempt is made to put this on the stage; it is brought before the audience, not as a dramatist would now be expected to bring it, but as an epic poet would have done, *i.e.* it is simply related by a Messenger.

The third point in which the *Persians* illustrates the immaturity of the drama at this time is the little use to which the second actor is put. What dialogue there is in the play is mainly carried on between the chorus and one of the actors, not between the two actors; and thus in this respect Æschylus, although he uses two actors in his play, gets little more out of them than could have been effected by the use of one.

As to the date of the *Suppliants*, there is no external evidence

and its composition and style do not enable us to settle its date relatively to the *Persians* and the *Seven against Thebes*. The action of a story may be said to consist of the attempt of a central figure to do something, and of the opposition encountered by, and the consequences following on, this effort. In an epic this action is *related*; in the drama it should be *acted* before the audience. Now in this respect the *Suppliants* as a work of art is in advance of both the other plays. In the *Persians* the formal influence of the epic is still so strong, that the action of the play is related, not acted. In the *Seven against Thebes* the action of the play is partly carried on before the spectator, inasmuch as the central figure, Eteocles, appears on the stage, although the opposing figure, Polynices, does not appear, but is only heard of. In the *Suppliants*, both the central figures, the chorus and the herald, the representative of the sons of Ægyptus, come upon the stage, and thus the attempt of the chorus to obtain protection in Argos is made, and opposed, and carried out before the eyes of the spectator. On the other hand, the *Suppliants* is in some respects less mature than the *Seven*. The latter play requires a supernumerary in addition to the two actors, while the *Suppliants* contains only three characters and needs only two actors. More important is it that in the *Suppliants* the chorus, both in the number of lines assigned to it and in its importance for the plot, occupies the greater part of the play. On the ground, then, that the advance of the drama may in some degree be measured by the decline of the chorus, the *Seven* might be put later than the *Suppliants*. But the *Eumenides* may serve to show us that logical development and chronological succession are not always identical, for the chorus plays a more important part in the *Eumenides* than in the *Seven*, yet the *Eumenides* is undoubtedly later in date.

For the date of the *Prometheus Bound* there is no external evidence, except that the allusion to the eruption of Ætna in B.C. 475 shows that it is later than that year; and if, as is probable, three actors were employed in the play, it belongs to a later period than the three plays already described. This conclusion is strengthened by general consideration of the style of the play. It is less stiff than the previous dramas; there is a reduction of the part assigned to the lyrical element, and the dialogue is more dominant. The myth of Prometheus, as treated by Æschylus, differs from the version of Hesiod. According to Hesiod, Prometheus instigated mankind to cheat Zeus of his offerings. In requital of this, Zeus deprived men of fire. Prometheus stole fire from heaven and again gave it to

man. For this Prometheus was punished by Zeus. Æschylus makes or avails himself of a different version. In the struggle between Zeus and the elder gods, Prometheus had at first taken the side of the latter; but the Titans disdained his wisdom, and he went over to Zeus. But Zeus, after his victory over the Titans, prepared to destroy mankind and to create a new race. To this Prometheus was opposed. He therefore gave to man what (according to this version) man had not possessed before—fire and the seeds of civilisation. Zeus condemned Prometheus, for thus opposing his design, to be nailed to a rock in Scythia. At this point the *Prometheus Bound* begins. Hephæstus and two attendants bring in Prometheus, taunt him, and nail him through the chest to a huge rock. To their taunts Prometheus answers nothing; only when his torturers have departed does he appeal to earth, and sky, and sea to witness his unjust suffering. The chorus, the daughters of Ocean, now enter, in sympathy with and compassion for Prometheus, who tells them that a danger, the secret of which he alone knows, threatens Zeus. The old god Ocean then comes and tries to show Prometheus how unreasonable is his resistance to Zeus; but Prometheus will not hear him. There follows a long episode, in which Io, another victim of Zeus, appears in the course of her frenzied wanderings. Prometheus foretells that Zeus will be overthrown by a descendant of Io, and she departs. The daughters of Ocean again try to persuade Prometheus to make his peace with Zeus, but he will not be persuaded. Then Hermes enters, bearing the order of Zeus that Prometheus shall reveal his secret, and threatening him in case of contumacy; but Prometheus will not be compelled, and the play ends as Zeus dispatches Prometheus, amid thunder and lightning, to Tartarus.

Æschylus' work has often been compared to statuary, and the comparison particularly illustrates the nature of his plots. Each play consists of a single situation and of a very slight amount of action. The monotony which might be expected from so rudimentary a form of drama is, however, relieved in several ways. Although there is little or no action, there is a gradation of interest which reaches its climax in the central situation; light and shade in the picture are produced by variety of incident, and simple but powerful contrasts are attained by the grouping of figures. The play falls into three parts, each marked by the entrance of a fresh character, whose appearance gives the motive or key to what follows. In this we see the force of tradition. When only one actor appeared in a tragedy, he ap

peared successively in different parts, changing his costume during a choral ode, and although, with the introduction of a second and a third actor, the necessity for this severe distribution of the play ceased, the distribution was not at once cast aside. Even in the *Agamemnon*, the greatest of the works of Æschylus, this tripartite division of the play is observed. Yet not only is the *Agamemnon* the grandest of the plays of Æschylus, but the command which it shows of the advances then being made in the management of the drama by Sophocles indicates that it must be one of the latest. A third actor is required, and the chorus is increased to fifteen choreutæ. The character of Clytemestra is drawn in such detail as shows the influence of Sophocles on his rival. Pathos appears, for the first time, in the treatment of Cassandra, and the irony which is distinctive of Sophocles is clearly to be discovered in the *Agamemnon*.

The *Choephori* is but little connected with the *Agamemnon*. Each drama is independent of the other. The connection of the *Choephori* with the *Eumenides* is closer. The latter drama takes up the story of the former immediately, and the scene of the *Eumenides* (Delphi) is, as it were, formally announced at the end of the *Choephori*.

The characters of Æschylus are not drawn with minute detail, but in majestic outline. There is little of the psychological analysis which is the result of a developed art. His figures are commanding or terrible, and their very silence is such as to inspire awe.[1] In the *Persians*, the queen-mother, Atossa, listens in long and painful silence to the news of the Persian disaster.[2] In the *Prometheus Bound*, Prometheus endures in impressive silence all the taunts of his mocking torturers. In the *Agamemnon*, Cassandra is present but speechless, whilst Clytemestra receives with over-acted affection the husband she is about to murder. Æschylus' employment of the eloquence of silence is interesting, not merely because of its effect in his hands, but because it illustrates vividly the art with which he turns to advantage the very obstacles which the rudimentary state of the drama in his time threw in his way. When the dramatist had only two actors to perform a play, he might, by means of supernumeraries, have on the stage more than two characters at once, as in the *Prometheus Bound*. Prometheus and his torturers, Hephæstus, Kratos, and Bia, are all on together, but only two of them could speak. It was no doubt this enforced

[1] Aristoph. *Frogs*, 911. [2] *Persæ*, 294.

silence which suggested to Æschylus the dramatic use to which silence might be put.

Although Æschylus' characters are drawn with powerful and decided outlines, and are further brought out by contrasts, such as that between the royal Agamemnon and the wretched Ægisthus, whose courage consists in sharing the benefit and the disgrace, but not the danger of the murder; his characters have this common fault, that, high or low, free or slave, messenger or king, they all speak with the same exalted and majestic words and metaphors.

In two respects the character-drawing of the *Agamemnon* differs from that of other plays of Æschylus. Elsewhere his figures are majestic or terrible. In the character of Cassandra alone is Æschylus pathetic. When the spirit of prophecy leaves her she becomes a thorough woman, and a woman whose misfortunes and impending death unite to touch us with a pity which Æschylus does not at other times appeal to. In the delineation of Clytemestra we have detailed work such as is not to be found elsewhere in Æschylus. In the quiet contempt with which, in almost her first words, she receives the chorus' suggestion that she has learnt the news of Troy's fall by means of a dream, she reveals her impiety. Her unwomanly self-reliance is shown in the disdain with which throughout she ignores the Argive elders. To appreciate this, we should compare her with Atossa in the *Persians*, Æschylus' type of a womanly woman. Atossa, in the same situation as Clytemestra, puts a belief, fully justified by the event, in the dreams sent by Heaven, consults the chorus of aged Persians, and follows their advice with the most implicit reliance. In the welcome with which Clytemestra receives Agamemnon, the unreality of her words is delicately revealed by the rhetoric with which she slightly overacts her part, and by the self-consciousness with which she hastens to assure Agamemnon that she is not deceiving him. Up to this point of the play, any indications of her real feelings which have escaped her have been involuntary. When, however, Agamemnon is safely in her toils and she is left alone with Cassandra, then Clytemestra, partly in her security and partly in her hatred of Cassandra, loses a little of her self-restraint, and, with all the virulence of a bad woman's hatred, taunts the unfortunate Trojan princess with being a slave. To all Clytemestra's attempts to extort a word from her, Cassandra replies with a silence more powerful—in a woman above all—than words. Clytemestra then enters the palace to commit her crime, and when afterwards she is revealed in the

triumph of her deed, she glories in what she has done with an intensity of passion terrible even for Æschylus. This speech, which is soaked with blood, is the culmination of the violence of Clytemestra's character. The reaction now slowly begins. Hitherto, absorbed in the excitement of entrapping her prey, she has had no thought for aught else. Now she begins to justify her work, and her self-justification and her self-reliance are of so little avail that she must openly declare that she looks for her "great shield of courage" to Ægisthus, who even yet has not mustered spirit enough to crawl from his hiding-place.

The chorus in the Æschylean drama has a double function. As the representative of the lyrical element of the drama, it is the means by which Æschylus conveys speculations on moral and religious problems, a belief in the justice of the gods, and above all in the righteousness of Zeus.[1] On the other hand, the chorus takes a part in the action of the play. The actors represent gods or heroes; the chorus represents average humanity.[2] Accordingly we find in Æschylus the character of the chorus drawn in firm outlines. In the *Agamemnon*, the chorus is composed of old men, and, as is natural in old men, they like to dwell on old memories,[3] they prefer the gloomy view of things,[4] are doubtful and cautious,[5] and are reliant on oracles and dark sayings.[6] At the same time, old and weak as they are, under the spur of a crime so revolting to humanity as that of Clytemestra, they speak out in open condemnation[7] and brave Ægisthus' threats.[8]

In the *Prometheus*, as in the *Eumenides*, the chorus, although not of mortals but of goddesses, has a distinct character, and the character of the chorus of Oceanides is specially interesting, because it shows that although Æschylus habitually worked in colours almost oppressively sombre, it was possible for him to reach the highest level of art when painting what is bright and fair. From the time of Aristophanes[9] at least, the choric odes of Æschylus have been accused of excessive length, and their length is one of the consequences of the original predominance of the chorus and the rudimentary state of the drama in his time. Although by the introduction of a second actor he made the dialogue the most important part of the drama,[10] still, like the speeches of the actors, the odes of the chorus for some time retained an inordinate length. These long speeches and odes are, from a modern point of view, a drag upon the action of the

[1] *E.g. Ag.* 155–161, 167–171, 360 ff. [2] Aristot. *Prob.* xix. 40.
[3] *Ag.* 104 ff. [4] Ib. 120. [5] Ib. 462, 1315. [6] Ib. 104 ff.
[7] Ib. 1378. [8] Ib. 164 ff. [9] *Frogs*, 879. [10] Aristot. *Poetics*, iv. 16.

play, and contribute largely to the immobility of the Æschylean drama. On the other hand, the variety of emotions depicted in an ode gave an amount of light and shade which, to a people accustomed to recitations and new to the drama, doubtless, compensated greatly for the absence of dramatic action.

In the style of Æschylus we see the man. His independence and force of character are shown in the words he coined,[1] in his martial expressions,[2] in his fondness for imagery drawn from the action of the more pugnacious or dangerous animals,[3] from the chase,[4] from field or river sports,[5] and his naval metaphors.[6] His metaphors and similes are usually bold, and sometimes startling; thus Iphigenia is described as having, not a fair face, but a fair prow;[7] the sea covered with floating corpses after a storm is likened to a field spotted over with flowers; and Clytemestra compares herself, drenched with the blood of her husband, to a field wet with rain from heaven.

To claim simplicity for Æschylus' style may sound paradoxical, but his type of sentence is simple. He prefers co-ordinate to subordinate sentences, and asyndeton and anacoluthon by their frequent occurrence mark an early simplicity of syntax. His obscurity is largely due to his abundant metaphors; these are based on close observation of nature,[8] but are too luxuriant. He suffers from a plethora of ideas and a pleonasm of imagery, and hence becomes obscure. But this is throughout the spontaneous overflow of a poet's mind, and not the overcrowded decoration of artificial and laboured rhetoric.

The seven plays by Æschylus which we have were certainly far from being the only plays he wrote. The rest have, however, perished, and all we know about them is what is to be inferred from the quotations made from them by various ancient writers. These quotations, when gathered together and placed under the names of the plays from which they were quoted, are

[1] *E.g.* in the *Agamemnon*:—δεμνιοστήρης, γυιοβαρής, λαγοδαίτης, κεναγγής, παλιντυχής. ὀρθοδαής, πολυκανής, φονολιβής, δομοσφαλής, ἀρχηγενής, εὐφιλής, δημοπληθής, παλιμμήκης, αἰνολαμπής. μελαμπαγής, νυκτηρεφής, ὁμοιοπρεπής, φρενομανής, λιμόθυμος, ἰατρίβης, δημορριφής, and for others *cf.* Mitchell's *Prolegg.* 788.

[2] *E.g.* χαρᾶς ἐκ δορικτύπου, "on the spear-throwing hand," for the right hand, *Ag.* 115; or γυναικὸς αἰχμή for "a woman's disposition."

[3] *E.g.* vultures, *Ag.* 49; eagles, *Ag.* 114, *Cho.* 239; lions, *Ag.* 696; wolves, *Cho.* 413; vipers, *Cho.* 240; snakes, *Pers.* 81.

[4] *E.g. Ag.* 125, 840, 1062, 1156, 1347; *Cho.* 567; *Pers.* 97.

[5] *E.g. Ag.* 349, 675, 1015, 1030, 1061, 1155, 1346, 1601.

[6] *E.g. Ag.* 775, 976 *et seq.*, 1596; *Cho.* 381.

[7] στόματος καλλιπρῴρου, *Ag.* 227.

[8] For this *cf. Ag.* 548, 865, 887.

called the "Fragments" of Æschylus. The play from which more quotations happen to have been made by ancient writers than from any other is the *Prometheus Unbound*. The reason is that in the *Prometheus Unbound* Æschylus inserted some geographical descriptions dealing with remote nations, which proved to be useful to later writers on geography, such as Strabo (born B.C. 66, died A.D. 24) or Arrian (born about B.C. 100), who quoted from them.

Many of the citations from Æschylus occur in lexicographers, such as Hesychius (who lived about A.D. 400), who inserted in their lexicons strange or remarkable words found in the tragedians, and explained them, appending the name of the play in which they occurred. Many quotations, also, consisting of single words, occur in the grammarians of various periods, who quote to prove the usage of Attic writers. From such quotations as these we can learn little more than the names of the lost plays, and we find the names of altogether eighty-two. Many of these plays were on the same subjects, and some have the same names, as those of later tragedians. Thus Æschylus as well as Euripides wrote an *Iphigenia* and a *Heraclidæ*. The *Bassarides* and *Edoni* were on the same subject as the *Bacchæ* of Euripides. The *Women of Ætna* was probably an outcome of the tragedian's visit to Sicily. The *Psychostasia* or *Weighing of the Souls* seems, according to the description of it given by Plutarch, to have been very characteristic of Æschylus. In the first place, the author had the daring to lay the scene in heaven (this we learn from Pollux, iv. 130, a grammarian who lived about A.D. 180). This was probably the only time in the Greek drama that Zeus was brought before the eyes of the spectators. Next, he took the subject from Homer; third, as in the *Eumenides* he put into visible shape the Furies, who up to that time existed for the Greeks only as vague and shapeless terrors of the mind; so in the *Weighing of the Souls* he actually made Zeus weigh the souls of Hector and Achilles in a pair of scales.[1] Lastly, he who had done so much for the Greek stage and the accessories of the drama invented for this play probably a special

[1] It is interesting to note that Aristophanes, who was to comedy what Æschylus was to tragedy, possessed the same boldness of conception, and in the same way gave bodily form to a metaphor or a simile (see below ch. vii.) Indeed, part of the *Frogs* contains a "weighing of the souls" of Æschylus and Euripides, done by means of a pair of "property" scales. It is also interesting to note that later the "Homeromastix" seized on precisely the passage of Homer on which the *Psychostasia* is based to ridicule Homer. Both Æschylus and the Homeromastix seem to have been ignorant of the specific difference between dramatic and narrative poetry.

stage, high in the air, on which he made Zeus and the other gods appear.

Finally, there are a number of quotations from the lost plays of Æschylus in an anthology made by Stobæus (about A.D. 520), which shows that, even then, many plays survived which have since been lost. These quotations were apparently chosen by Stobæus on account of their general applicability to life and human affairs, rather than because they surpassed in poetic merit the rest of the play from which they were taken, *e.g.* "useful, not extensive, knowledge makes the sage," or "bad men successful are not to be borne." "Brass is the mirror of the body, wine of the mind," may remind us that water and brass were what the Greeks used as looking-glasses. Late learning, which provoked the mirth of Plato and Theophrastus, is not always matter for raillery. "To learn wisdom is an honour even to the aged." Until Christianity taught us otherwise, men held that "death is preferable to a hard life, and to never be, better than to have been born to suffer." Again, Æschylus said, "An oath is no pledge for a man; the man is the pledge for the oath." If "a fool fortunate is a grievous burden," yet there is a word of hope for us in "Heaven helps the man who works."

The sons of Æschylus, and his descendants for some generations, appear to have followed the dramatic profession, as also did those of Sophocles and Euripides; and it is accordingly usual to speak of the family or school of Æschylus, or Sophocles, or Euripides. There is, however, no evidence to show that such a school worked on a common artistic method, whether inherited from their illustrious ancestor or peculiar to themselves; nor is there evidence to show that they had any bond of community beyond that of their common ancestry. The conjectures that they alone had the right to produce their ancestor's plays, or (in the case of the school of Æschylus) that they were marked by an adherence to the trilogy, are disproved by inscriptions containing the official didascaliæ. These inscriptions show that certainly in B.C. 340 three plays were not necessarily produced at a time; that when three plays were simultaneously produced, even by a member of the school of Æschylus, they had not that inner bond of connection distinctive of the trilogy of Æschylus; and, finally, that old plays were produced, not by the school of the author, but by the protagonist.

Æschylus' son, Euphorion, four times won the prize with tragedies of his father hitherto not produced on the stage. He also wrote plays of his own; but with what success, or of

what merit, we do not know. The nephew of Æschylus, Philocles, although his style was accused of harshness, must have been a tragedian of considerable distinction, for he won the prize against Sophocles when the latter produced his *Œdipus Rex*. Philocles, amongst other plays, seems to have produced a tetralogy, the *Pandionis*, which appeared some time before B.C. 414; for it is alluded to in the *Birds* of Aristophanes. Morsimus, the son of Philocles, vests his claim to mention less on his tragedies, which were frigid, than on the distinction of his son and grandson, who both bore the name of Astydamas. The elder Astydamas was originally trained in the school of Socrates, but eventually cultivated tragedy. The importation of rhetoric into tragedy, which had been begun by Euripides, was thus carried on by Astydamas. His style, like that of Euripides, was gnomic, and his versification was loose. Some confusion has been made between Astydamas the father and Astydamas the son. It is generally stated that the father was the more distinguished tragedian, and that his *Parthenopæus* was of such merit that the Athenians awarded him the honour, hitherto only accorded to the three great tragedians, of a statue. Stone records, however, show that it was the younger Astydamas who brought out the *Parthenopæus*, and it follows that the son was the more successful poet of the two. This is also borne out by the fact that, even according to the few inscriptions at present known, the younger Astydamas won the prize two years running. In B.C. 431 he brought out the *Achilleus*, *Athamas*, and *Antigone*. The *Alcmæon* mentioned by Aristotle (*Poetics*, xiv. 15) is generally ascribed to the elder Astydamas.

CHAPTER III.

SOPHOCLES.

SOPHOCLES was born at Colonus about 495 B.C. His father, Sophillus, was a smith, that is to say, he owned slaves who worked as smiths, and from their work he obtained his income, as the father of Demosthenes gained his wealth by employing a large number of slaves to manufacture weapons. The worship at Colonus of Prometheus, the Titan who gave to man fire, seems to indicate that the art of working metals had been established for some time in the deme, and the "brazen threshold,"

if the words of Sophocles[1] are to be taken literally, would point to the existence there of a guild of metal-workers. The beauty of his birthplace is celebrated by Sophocles in the famous ode of the *Œdipus Coloneus*,[2] and we may see traces of the early associations of Sophocles in the chorus of smiths brought into his lost play *Pandora*, and in the introduction in another play of Kedalion, the gnome who taught Hephæstus smithying.[3] Sophillus' wealth was sufficiently great to give Sophocles the best of educations, and to place him in a good position in Athenian society. He was chosen (B.C. 480) to lead the chorus of boys who sang the Pæan in honour of the victory at Salamis. The first occasion on which, to our knowledge, he won a tragic prize was in B.C. 468. For the date and the fact that he won the prize we have the authority of a stone record.[4] The other particulars supposed to be connected with this event —that Cimon had just returned from his expedition to Scyrus, and that the Archon Apsephion, in consequence of the height to which feeling ran among the spectators, made Cimon and his colleagues award the prize instead of the proper judges—rest only on the authority of Plutarch.[5] Lessing has conjectured that the victorious play was the *Triptolemus*.[6] As to the plays produced by Sophocles between B.C. 468 and B.C. 440, we have not even conjectures. This, the first, period of Sophocles' dramatic development is, as far as his literary activity is concerned, an entire blank for us. We know, besides, on the authority of an inscription, that he was on the board of treasurers who managed the tribute paid to Athens by her allies, in the year B.C. 442;[7] but that is all. In B.C. 440 he was elected strategus or general, and the production of the *Antigone* is generally associated with this event.[8] It fell to his lot to assist as strategus with Pericles in conducting the naval war against Samos. His duties took him to Lesbos among other places, and fortunately we have an account of his proceedings, written by some one who met him there. Ion, the tragedian,

[1] Œ. C. 57: χαλκόπους δδός. [2] Ib. 668.

[3] Fragments 724 and 734 (Dind.) point to the same fact.

[4] C. I. G. 2374.

[5] And are exceedingly improbable. (1) Cimon went to Scyrus in B.C. 476. Sophocles won the prize in B.C. 468. (2) If this was Sophocles' first contest, how could the spectators' feelings be so excited about an unknown competitor? (3) The Archon had no power to reject the legally appointed judges.

[6] But it is only a doubtful conjecture from Plin. N. H. xviii. 65.

[7] C. I. A. i. 237: Σοφοκλῆς Κολωνῆθεν Ἑλληροταμίας ἦν.

[8] Aristophanes of Byzantium, who would be an authority, does not guarantee the statement, in the Argument to the *Antigone*, that Sophocles' election was due to the *Antigone*. The statement is puerile. The tragic prize, not naval or military command, was awarded to a victorious poet.

in his *Epidemiæ*[1] (a record of the visits of celebrated men to Chios) says:—"I met the poet Sophocles in Chios at the time when he came as strategus to Lesbos. He is a playful man over his wine and witty. He was entertained by the Athenian consul, Hermesilaus, a friend of his. In the course of conversation, Sophocles happened to quote the line of Phrynichus, 'In purple cheeks there shines the light of love.' Whereupon a schoolmaster from Eretria or Erythræ remarked, 'You are a great poet, Sophocles, but, for all that, it was inaccurate of Phrynichus to speak of purple cheeks. If an artist were to put purple cheeks in a picture, they would not look beautiful. It is utterly wrong to compare what is beautiful to something which is not.' Sophocles replied with a laugh, 'Then, sir, in opposition to universal opinion, you do not approve of Simonides' line, "A maid who speaks with purple lips," nor of the poet who speaks of golden-haired Apollo? for if a painter made the god's hair gold and not black, the painting would be a bad one. Nor of the poet who talks of rosy-fingered Dawn? for an artist who used paint of a rose-colour would give her the hands of a dyer, not of a pretty woman?'" A roar of laughter extinguished the schoolmaster, and Ion goes on to say that Sophocles, having cheated a pretty child into giving him a kiss, explained to the company, "Pericles says I am a poet, not a general; so I am practising generalship. Do not you think my stratagem succeeded very well?" Ion adds, "Public business he did not know or care much about, except as befitted a decent Athenian." The story is equally creditable to the discernment of Pericles and the good temper of Sophocles. Pericles, moreover, seems to have acted on his opinion. Being the chief strategus, Pericles directed the movements of the other generals, and accordingly, so far as possible, engaged Sophocles with fetching up reinforcements and such work. In fact, it was because he was sent to Lesbos for reinforcements and supplies that Sophocles got an opportunity for the stratagem which Ion describes. It was the most successful stratagem of the war, so far as Sophocles was concerned, for when Pericles had to leave him to conduct the siege of Samos, he at once contrived to get defeated. Few other facts are known with regard to his life. Whether the Sophocles whom Aristotle mentions[2] as having been one of the ten Probuli who consented to establish the tyranny of the Four Hundred in B.C. 413 is the poet is uncertain. The story of his being accused by his son Iophon of madness, and of his vindicating his sanity by reading the *Œdipus*, is full of diffi-

[1] Athenæus, xiii. 604E.

[2] *Rhet.* iii. 18. 6.

culties.[1] Sophocles died about B.C. 405, and there are various supernatural stories as to the manner of his death.[2]

Before proceeding to consider the tragedies of Sophocles, we may say that the supposition as to Herodotus and Sophocles having been acquainted is extremely probable. There are similarities in certain passages of the two authors,[3] though too much weight must not be assigned to these similarities. We have the beginning of an elegy by Sophocles dedicated to Herodotus,[4] and Herodotus spent so much time in Athens that it is almost impossible that he should not have met Sophocles. It has been imagined that there are in Herodotus' history traces of views and information which would naturally come only from Pericles; but at any rate, it is not unreasonable to imagine that Herodotus may have met Sophocles at the house of Pericles. Wherever they met, they would sympathise. Their way of looking at the world, their views of Fate and Nemesis, were the same.

By bringing down philosophy from the skies to the earth, Socrates gave a new direction to philosophy, which philosophy

[1] It is not impossible that the story is based on a misunderstanding of a scene in some comedy in which Sophocles and Iophon may have been made fun of. At any rate, a charge of madness could not have been brought before the Phratores, as the story has it, for such cases were brought before the Archon only. *Lex. Seg.* 199. 10, and *Poll.* viii. 89.

[2] The story that he was choked by a grape originates in a stupid misunderstanding of the younger Simonides' epigram (*Anth. Pal.* vii. 20)—

Ἐσβέσθης, γηραιὲ Σοφόκλεες, ἄνθος ἀοιδῶν,
Οἰνωπὸν Βάκχου βότρυν ἐρεπτόμενος.

These lines, which mean that Sophocles died whilst engaged on a tragedy, which, being a tragedy, was dedicated to Bacchus, were taken literally.

[3] *E.g.* the dream of Clytemestra, *El.* 417, and of Astyages, *Hdt.* i. 108, the reference in *Trach.* 1 to Solon's maxim, the legend of the oracle of Dodona, *Hdt.* ii. 55, followed in the *Trachiniæ*, the customs of the Scyths in *Fr.* 429 and *Hdt.* iv. 64, the description of the Egyptians in *O. C.* 337. The passage in *Antig.* 905–915 is almost identical with *Hdt.* 3. 119. In both cases the argument is that a sister, when her parents are dead, is bound to sacrifice everything to her brother, because he cannot be replaced. As to the *Antigone*, however, it has been said that this argument is inconsistent, sophistical, ignoble, and misplaced. From this some have inferred that Sophocles has borrowed from Herodotus, or that the passage in the *Antigone* is spurious. On the other hand, it is said that Sophocles shows his truth to nature in making Antigone's feelings before and after her deed different, and that the argument is not sophistical or misplaced, but primitive, and appropriate in Greek, though not in modern times.

[4] Plut. *Mor.* 785B:—

ᾠδὴν Ἡροδότῳ τεῦξεν Σοφοκλῆς ἐτέων ὢν πέντ' ἐπὶ πεντήκοντα.

If this could be relied on, and the date of Sophocles' strategia were certainly B.C. 440—and both points are uncertain—this would show that Sophocles probably met Herodotus at Samos.

has retained to this day. In a different sense, Sophocles brought down the drama from the skies to the earth, and the drama still follows the course which Sophocles first marked out for it. It was on the gods, the struggles of the gods, and on destiny that Æschylus dwelt; it is with man that Sophocles is concerned. From this difference flow all the differences between the two poets, and herein consists the advance which Sophocles made in the development of the drama. Such action as the plays of Æschylus possess they derive from the force of destiny. What is done by a character in the Æschylean drama is, it is true, consistent with that character. The murder of Agamemnon could be expected from Clytemestra alone. But although she is suited to the deed and the deed to her, if we ask *why* she murdered Agamemnon, we shall find that the reason lies, not in her character nor in her circumstances but, in her destiny. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that one critic attributes her act to wounded maternal feelings, another to her adultery, and each critic rejects the reason alleged by the other; whereas Clytemestra herself says it was not she who killed Agamemnon. but the evil "destiny of the Atridæ" taking her form. In Sophocles, on the other hand, the motive force of the drama is always to be found in the passions of men, and not in the external action of destiny. The Ajax of Sophocles commits suicide, not because he is fated to do so, but because to him, after his disgrace, life is not merely distasteful, but impossible. The force at work here is internal, and consists in the feelings of Ajax. On the contrary, the Orestes of Æschylus has no proper motion of his own. He is simply the channel through which the action of the gods flows. What he does is not his own doing, but what Apollo bids. The force is from without, not from within. Contrast this with Sophocles. Every action of Œdipus is the natural necessary outcome of his character and his circumstances, and when peace does come to him, it is from within; whereas, in the case of Orestes, there is a purely external conflict between Apollo and the Erinyes, and Orestes' absolution comes not from within, but from without. In Æschylus we have symbolism, in Sophocles poetic truth.

Although, in Sophocles, the mainspring of man's actions is men's passions, we still find fatalism in Sophocles, but not the fatalism of Æschylus. With Æschylus, Atreus commits a crime, and the punishment falls upon his children for generations in the shape of a destiny compelling them to crimes. With Sophocles, the house of the Labdacidæ is indeed under a

similar curse, but the cause of Œdipus' deeds is not destiny, but circumstances and himself. The fatalism of Sophocles is that of Herodotus, and probably of the ordinary Greek of the time. It may be illustrated from Herodotus. According to the historian, Crœsus, the father of Atys, learning from an oracle that his son was destined to perish by an iron weapon, confined him to the house with the purpose of evading the doom foretold by the oracle. The son, however, persuaded Crœsus to allow him to go to the chase, and then was accidentally killed by the very person to whose care Crœsus, in his dread of the oracle, had intrusted him. This is the worst kind of fatalism, for it teaches that man cannot avoid his fate, whatever he may do, and thus encourages helpless and indolent resignation to an imaginary necessity.[1] This was the fatalism which Sophocles found and accepted. But if he adopted this and other common beliefs, he, as a poet, by adopting them elevated and refined them.

It is probably impossible to discuss Sophocles' attitude towards fatalism without reading into him at least some ideas which could not be present to the mind of any Greek. It is difficult to always realise that Sophocles knew nothing of the free-will controversy, and consequently felt no alarm at fatalism. Remembering, however, this fact, we shall not consider it a paradox to say that Sophocles shows how men run on their fate of their own free-will. Œdipus is warned by Apollo of his doom, and he fulfils his doom; but all his acts are his own; neither man nor God can be blamed. The lesson as well as the art of Sophocles is that man's fate, though determined by the gods, depends on his actions, and his actions on himself and his circumstances. The contradiction which to us is involved in this did not exist for Sophocles. If Sophocles did not find out any incompatibility between free-will and fatalism, neither did he see in fatalism any imputation on the justice of the gods. Indeed, the contrary is the case. The action of the gods in foretelling to Œdipus and to Atys their fate is open to a double construction. It is possible to regard it as mere cruel deception (for the parents of whom Œdipus was told were not the parents that he supposed to be meant, nor was the weapon that actually proved fatal the weapon which Atys supposed). But if this view of the gods was held by others, it was not the view of Sophocles. In him we find no complaint of the injustice of the gods. On the contrary, the gods warn man, and yet man does what they have tried to save him from. The heavens

[1] *Antigone*, 236. *Cf.* Æsch. *S. c. Th.* 263. Plato (*Gorg.* 512B) calls it a woman's creed.

speak to man, but he understands them not. If Œdipus is not to be blamed, neither certainly are the gods. For Sophocles, fatalism was consistent both with free-will and with the justice of the gods; on neither subject had he any doubts to solve. Nor does his tragedy concern itself to give an answer to the question, why do the innocent suffer? The innocent *do* suffer, and that fact is the tragedy of life. His plays are not works of theology; their object is not to solve problems. The sufferings of the innocent cause pity and fear, and thus serve in tragedy to redeem the crudity of fatalism. When Deianira in her love for her husband innocently causes his death, we feel the pity which it is the part of tragedy to excite; and when we read of Œdipus and his undeserved sufferings, we feel so much fear as is implied in obeying the utterance "Judge not."

In this connection we may consider the "irony of Sophocles." In argument irony has many forms. That which best illustrates the irony of Sophocles is the method by which the ironical man, putting apparently innocent questions or suggestions, leads some person from one preposterous statement to another, until, perhaps, the subject of the irony realises his situation and discovers that when he thought he was most brilliant or impressive, then he was really most absurd. There are, or may be, three persons who assist at an ironical argument—the ironical man, the subject, and the spectator; and they appreciate the irony at different times, the subject retrospectively, the ironical man prospectively, and the spectator contemporaneously. Their feelings will vary according to circumstances. The spectator may sympathise with the ironical man or with the victim, and his feelings will be accordingly those of enjoyment or of compassion. What the ironical man feels will depend largely on his motive. He may feel amusement simply or triumph, or his object may be that of Socrates, whose irony was intended to rouse men to a sense of their ignorance and to a real desire for knowledge. In the case of Socrates, successful irony must have been accompanied by the consciousness of having rendered a service to philosophy, to the person with whom he conversed, and to those who listened.

We are now in a position to see how the term irony may be extended from its use as applied to argument, and be also applied to human action. When Œdipus was told by Apollo that he would kill his father and commit incest with his mother, he at once fled from his home at Corinth, and found his way to Thebes. There he married the queen, became king, was blest with children and a glorious reign. When the

revelation comes, he looks back upon his life only to see that the flight from Corinth, which was to take him far from his parents, led him to meet and kill his father and to wed his mother; that the children in whom he thought himself blest are the fruit of incest, and that the glory of his reign was a revolting horror. But if his glance was retrospective, that of the gods was prospective. His feelings are such as no one can help him to bear the burden of:[1] what are those of the gods? That is a question to which Sophocles never gives an answer. Perhaps he thought it inscrutable. But as there is a third party to the irony of argument, so there is to the irony of life, that is, the spectator. His feelings are not inscrutable. Pity he will feel, and if the irony of Socrates could teach the bystander a lesson against intellectual pride, the irony of Sophocles may teach the spectator a lesson against moral pride.

For the full appreciation of the irony of Sophocles, and of its artistic value in heightening the interest of the drama, it must be remembered that whereas the torturing contrast between the condition of Œdipus, as he fancies it, and as it really is, is only discovered by Œdipus at the last moment, this contrast is perpetually present from the beginning to the spectator. The artistic value of this is double. In the first place, the spectator having known the real state of things from the first, has all along been in the state of mind in which Œdipus finds himself when the revelation has come; and the consequence is that the spectator needs no explanation from Œdipus of his state of mind, but comprehends and sympathises at once with Œdipus when he blinds himself. Thus the action of the drama is enabled to proceed with a directness and rapidity which would be impossible if Œdipus had to explain the motives of his self-mutilation. In the second place, the contrast between Œdipus' fancied height of glory and his really piteous position is present to the mind of the spectator throughout. Thus every word in the drama has a doubled effect upon the feelings.

The drama owes its origin to religion and its development to art. It is but another way of stating this fact to say that one sign of the growth of the Greek drama was the diminution of its religious significance. This is partly illustrated by the diminishing importance of the chorus. It is also illustrated in that displacement of destiny by character as the motive force.

The characters of Sophocles are bound up with his plots in such an artistic and harmonious whole, that to attempt to con-

[1] O. T. 1414.

sider his characters apart is an unsatisfactory proceeding His plots depend upon his characters, for the plot of a play consists of the actions of the *dramatis personæ*, and it is part of the excellence of Sophocles that the actions of his *dramatis personæ* are motived, not by stage necessity or by an external destiny, but by the character ascribed to them. On the other hand, it is equally true that his characters depend upon his plots. The frequent revolutions and the catastrophes of the Sophoclean drama do not by themselves constitute the interest of the play, as neither does the painting of character constitute the whole or the most important part of his tragedies. The plot has its intrinsic interest, but it also develops the characters. For instance, unless Electra were deceived into believing that Orestes was dead, the spectator would witness neither her despair, nor the bold resolve which that despair serves only to create. If Philoctetes were not first exalted to hope and then reduced to helplessness, his pertinacity in abiding by his resolution would not be brought into relief. Sophocles shows us not only the action and outward bearing of a King Œdipus, but also the inner struggles of feeling which result in action and outward bearing. The spectator of the *Agamemnon* knows little more of Clytemestra's character than does the chorus, or perhaps it is that there is little more to know. The spectator of the *Ajax*, on the contrary, knows of Ajax' inward struggles what no other character but Ajax knows.

The criticism[1] that Euripides drew men as they are, Sophocles as he ought, must not be understood to mean that Euripides drew them with greater truth. Euripides' characters have not unfrequently that worst of faults, faultlessness; whereas Sophocles never makes that mistake. Œdipus is proud and hasty; Electra is hard; Neoptolemus consents to practise a deception against which his better feelings protest; Antigone, when the moment of action is over, becomes a thorough woman. Finally, the truth with which Sophocles makes Antigone and Ajax regret the life they are about to lose is apt to escape modern notice. Christianity has so familiarised us with man's immortality that we forget he is also mortal. But no Greek writer forgot it, least of all did Sophocles, and to this unforgetfulness we owe passages in Sophocles of the greatest beauty.

If we now proceed to examine the position and functions of the chorus in the Sophoclean drama, we shall find its functions much the same as in Æschylus, but its position much less prominent. There are choral odes in Sophocles as in Æschylus,

[1] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 25, gives it as Sophocles' own criticism.

but they are much shorter. The chorus takes a part in the action of the play, but it is unimportant. In Æschylus the chorus is sometimes, *e.g.* in the *Persæ* or the *Eumenides*, the chief character of the play. In Sophocles the chorus is, as it were, enclitic; it always depends on one of the principal characters,[1] in sympathy with whom it grieves[2] or rejoices[3] or prays to the gods.[4] In harmony with these duties, the chorus always consists of free people (not of slaves, as in the *Choephori* of Æschylus), either in a humble position, as the sailors in the *Philoctetes* and the *Ajax*, or of an age or sex from which action would not be expected, *e.g.* the old men of the *King Œdipus*, the *Œdipus at Colonus*, and the *Antigone*, or the young maidens of the *Trachiniæ*. The chorus in Sophocles, as in Æschylus, is invested with a definite and individual character.[5] It is not an impersonal entity; it is not intended to represent the poet's view of an impartial spectator, nor is it the means of conveying Sophocles' speculations on moral and religious questions. The lyrical odes occur at the points where there is necessarily or naturally a pause in the action of the drama, and they review what has happened and resume the situation.[6]

The subordinate position which the chorus is made in all respects to take in the Sophoclean drama must be connected with the fact that Sophocles raised the number of actors[7] from two to three. At first sight, this latter change looks as though it gave to Sophocles one actor more than Æschylus had. But it must be remembered that what Sophocles gained by the increase in the number of his actors, he partially surrendered by the restrictions he placed upon the action of the chorus. In Æschylus the chorus was not unfrequently the leading character of the piece. In Sophocles the chorus has no such position.

[1] Mostly on the hero or heroine, but sometimes, as in the *Philoctetes* or in the *Antigone*, on the character opposed to the hero or heroine.

[2] *E.g. Aj.* 139–141, 165–167; *El.* 121–123, 130, 137 *et seq.*, 153 *et seq.*, 173 *et seq.*; *Trach.* 103, 123 *et seq.*, 136 *et seq.*

[3] *E.g. Ant.* 100–154.

[4] *E.g. O. T.* 151, 187, 202, 204, 206; *Trach.* 94; *El.* 162, 173.

[5] See *Aj.* 165, 229, 245, 866, 925, 1185–1223; *Philoc.* 169, 708–718, 721, 836, 855, 963–965, 1071, 1469. *O. C.* 669–720, 829 *et seq.*, 1054 *et seq.*, 1211 *et seq.*

[6] *E.g.* in the *O. T.*, when Œdipus has announced that he is expecting Creon's return, there is naturally a pause, and the chorus describe the situation, that is, the plague. After the scene with Teiresias, in which Œdipus is himself accused of being the cause of the plague, Creon is expected to come and defend himself from Œdipus' charge of collusion with Teiresias. The interval of waiting is filled up by an ode, expressing the doubt as to who is the guilty man; and so on.

[7] As Æschylus employs three actors in the *Oresteia*, this innovation must have been made by Sophocles before B.C. 460.

The real change effected by Sophocles was not that he introduced a greater number of interlocutors, but that he transferred the burden of the piece almost entirely to the actors. At the same time that he practically excluded the chorus from the development of the action of the play, he developed the functions of the chorus in the sphere to which it was now confined. He raised the number of the choreutæ from twelve to fifteen, and it is reasonable to suppose that, as a consequence of this change, he introduced the Tritostates by the side of the Parastates and Coryphæus. So long as the chorus numbered only twelve, the movements of the Coryphæus were to a certain extent limited. For instance, when it was necessary for the chorus to divide into two Hemichoria, the Coryphæus was bound to range himself with one of the Hemichoria, and so far for the time abdicate his position as leader of the whole chorus. When, however, the chorus numbered fifteen, it might divide into two Hemichoria of seven choreutæ each. Then the two Hemichoria would be under the command of the Parastates and the Tritostates, while the Coryphæus would be at liberty to attend wholly to those parts of the dialogue in which he had a share, and to leave the evolution of the chorus to the care of his two subordinate officers, the Parastates and the Tritostates.

The style, like the character-drawing, of Sophocles bears a closer relation to life than does that of Æschylus. The work of each poet has beauty and truth, but the means by which they obtain the same end are different. The structure of the Æschylean sentence resembles that of Cyclopean masonry. It consists of huge words roughly thrown together. The construction of Sophocles' sentences resembles that of his plays. Under an appearance of simplicity is concealed an amount of thought almost inexhaustible. In this respect, and in the ductility of his sentence, Sophocles may be compared with Thucydides. Though the words of Sophocles have become simpler, his syntax is more complex than that of Æschylus. The hearer may be set thinking by Sophocles' expressions, but he is not startled by them. The harmony with which Sophocles combines the most various elements of the drama is equally characteristic of his style. He borrows words from Æschylus; he invents words of his own: he naturally, from the study of the founders of iambic verse, brings away Ionic words; and on him, as on Æschylus, the study of Homer has its effect. Yet the whole is marked by a predominant Attic colouring, and by a sweetness which is distinctive of Sophocles.

Of lost plays of Sophocles we have fragments and the titles

of about one hundred. Of these, nearly one-fourth apparently drew their subjects from the tale of Troy; and it is significant, both for the temper of the time and for Sophocles' tendency to psychological analysis, that Odysseus frequently appeared in these plays. Of the character of Odysseus as conceived by Sophocles we can fortunately form an idea from the sketch in the surviving play, *Philoctetes*. Several of the lost plays were on subjects also treated of by Euripides, *e.g.* the *Women of Colchis*, the *Scyths*, and the *Rhizotomi* (or *Witches*), which all dealt with the tale of Medea; and the *Phædra*, *Iphigenia*, *Alcmeon*, and *Alexander*. Some of the lost plays, such as the *Triptolemus*, *Oreithuia*, *Niobe*, and *Thamyras*, may have treated of their subjects in the Æschylean way, and may thus belong to the first period of Sophocles' style, while he was yet under the influence of Æschylus.[1] Finally, we may notice the names of a considerable number of satyric dramas, such as the *Kedalion* (a gnome whose story, as we have said above, was connected with Colonus), *Pandora*, *Momus*, *Ichneutæ*, *Heracles at Tænarum*, *Amycus*, *Helen's Wedding*, *Amphiareos*, *Syndeipni*, *Dionysiacus*, &c.

Among the fragments which are too long to quote, we may refer to two beautiful descriptions of love;[2] two passages, one on the changes, the other on the injustice, of fortune;[3] two others on money and poverty;[4] another on the discoveries of Palamedes;[5] and finally, a tender, graceful, and sympathetic description of the hard lot of women,[6] conceived in the spirit of the *Trachiniæ*. To the latter we may add the metaphor, quoted from the *Phædra*, by which Sophocles speaks of children as the anchors of a mother's life;[7] and contrast a line from the *Acrisius* embodying the current view that silence is a woman's ornament.[8] Among the shorter fragments, the most interesting are those in which the psychological penetration of Sophocles is to be seen, as when in the *Creusa* he says that a lost opportunity and an injury inflicted on one by oneself are the most

[1] Plutarch has preserved some remarks made by Sophocles on his own development as an artist, which, although somewhat difficult to interpret as given by Plutarch, still convey some information which we should otherwise not possess. Sophocles distinguished three stages in his own development. First Sophocles was influenced by the magnificence of Æschylus' style; then he began ridding himself of obscurity and artificiality; and finally he turned his attention to the expression of character. Of the first of these three stages we have nothing left: to the third, the *Antigone* and the *Œdipus at Colonus* must, and all the surviving dramas may, belong.

[2] Nauck. 154 and 856.

[3] 786, 104. [4] 860, 327. [5] 396. [6] 521. [7] 619. [8] 62.

painful of things.[1] From the *Laocoon*[2] we have an anticipation of Virgil's reflection, "Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit;" and from the *Mysi* a poetical expression of the psychological law that contrast heightens pleasure,[3] another exemplification of which may be found in a fragment of the *Tympanistæ*, which dwells on the pleasure after a voyage of being under a good roof and listening to the rain with drowsy mind.[4] The connection between mental and bodily illness had not escaped Sophocles' fine observation.[5] His wisdom comes out in his reflections in the *Aletes* that justice and kindliness profit more than sophistry:[6] in the *Aleadæ* that the right always has great might:[7] in the *Acrisius* that a lie cannot flourish long;[8] in the *Aleadæ* on the beauty of silence.[9] Finally, it is consonant with the amiability of Sophocles' character that there is a limit to the questions which a man with consideration for others' feelings can put.[10]

As belonging to the "school" of Sophocles, there are mentioned his son Iophon and his grandson Sophocles. Iophon won the second tragic prize in B.C. 429, and seems to have been suspected of receiving assistance from his father. In spite, however, of this, he is criticised as being frigid and tedious. The grandson, if, as is reported, he won the tragic prize twelve times, was a more successful, if not a better tragedian than Iophon, and won the prize oftener than did any one of the three great tragedians. Sophocles, the grandson, produced the *Œdipus at Colonus* after his grandfather's death, but whether the play had or had not been produced before, and what share the grandson had in the play, are uncertain points.

An interesting figure among the tragedians contemporary with Sophocles is that of Ion. Born in Chios and possessed of considerable wealth, he travelled much in Greece, and met all the distinguished Greeks of his time. He is, perhaps, the earliest recorded instance of an universal genius. His works included not only tragedies, but elegies, dithyrambs, epigrams, skolia, the "antiquities of Chios," and personal reminiscences, from the last of which a specimen was quoted at the beginning of this chapter. He first produced plays on the Athenian stage in B.C. 452, and we know that in B.C. 428, when Euripides and Iophon carried off the first and second prizes, Ion won the third. He died some time before B.C. 418, the year in which the *Peace* of Aristophanes was produced; for his death is alluded to in that comedy (835). The subjects of his tragedies were largely

[1] 323. [2] 344. [3] 372. [4] 574. [5] The *Tyro*, 597.
[6] 98. [7] 78. [8] 59. [9] 79. [10] Ib. 81.

taken from Homer; but in other cases his plots departed widely from the ordinary form of the myths prevalent among the Greeks. For instance, he makes Antigone and Ismene to be burnt in the temple of Hera by the son of Eteocles. His plays, though correct and careful, lacked the vigour and originality which mark a tragedian of genius. In point of style, he was at times forcible, and his figures were bold, but he was apt to become pompous, and occasionally obscure. His vocabulary differs from that of Athenian tragedies; he uses words of his own invention, retains many Ionicisms, and borrows a large proportion of words from epic writers.

The age of Neophron of Sicyon is doubtful; but if it is true that he first introduced a Pædagogus on the stage, he must date from before the *Electra* of Sophocles. It is, however, more interesting that Neophron wrote a *Medea*, to which Euripides' play of the same name was indebted. The fragments of Neophron's drama show that he was a poet of no small merit, and also point to the conclusion that Euripides, if indebted to his predecessor, borrowed in the treatment of the plot rather than from the style of Neophron. Yet in one point, even in the economy of the play, Euripides seems to have departed from Neophron's treatment; for whereas the latter makes Ægeus come expressly to consult Medea, the former makes him come to consult Pittheus, and thus what is essential to the plot is left by Euripides, as it was not left by Neophron, to chance.

Among the older contemporaries of Sophocles must be placed Carcinus of Agrigentum. His plays were of an antiquated description, and choral songs and dances predominated in them. He is better known as a founder of a "school" than as a poet. His son Xenocles defeated Euripides in B.C. 415, and Carcinus, the son of Xenocles, is distinguished by Aristotle's references to him in the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*. He seems to have been careless in the treatment of his plays, and at times artificial. Amongst other plays of his are mentioned an *Œdipus*, a *Medea*, and an *Orestes*. His style was flowing, he was inclined to be sententious, and had a tendency to philosophy. His versification is lax and somewhat conversational.

CHAPTER IV.

EURIPIDES.

EURIPIDES was born B.C. 485, in the island of Salamis, where his parents, with the rest of the Athenians, had taken refuge on the approach of the Persians. We have the express statement of Philochorus (who lived about B.C. 300) for the fact that his mother, Clito, was of good family; and his father, Mnesarchus, must have been possessed of some wealth, for Euripides led the chorus of boys at the Thargelia, and later in life attended the lectures of Prodicus, whose fees are well known to have been exceedingly high. It is said that Euripides was at first trained as an athlete, and that he subsequently became a painter. The latter statement is somewhat confirmed by the numerous allusions in his plays to painting and to art generally, and by the fact that his situations were so arranged that they became the subjects of many works of art. In his marital relations he is said to have been unhappy, though on this point we are treated to much scandal, but to no facts. Some, at least, of these stories [1] were invented to account for a misogynism which does not exist in his tragedies. If he says many severe things against women, he draws pure, affectionate, self-sacrificing women with a grace and tenderness unsurpassed. It is not strange that a poet who could conceive such characters should find in the women of Athens much that came short of his ideal. Under the system of seclusion which then prevailed in Athens, there is little reason to hesitate in accepting Aristotle's opinion,[2] that women might be good, but were generally inferior. If Euripides spares not the faults of women, he at least sees, what most other Greeks did not see, that the system under which they lived was to blame.[3] He is said to have been married twice, and to have had by his first wife three sons, the younger Euripides and two others. At the age of twenty-five he brought out his first play, the lost *Peliades;* but of his first thirteen years' work as a dramatic author we know nothing. The earliest of his plays which have survived is the *Alcestis*. The date of this play is said to have been B.C. 438, of the *Medea*, B.C. 431, and of the *Hippolytus*, B.C. 428. The *Medea* won the third prize. Euripides, according to the scholiasts, won the

[1] *E.g.* Sophocles' comment on the statement that Euripides hated women —"in his tragedies, yes."

[2] *Poet.* xv. 3.

[3] *Medea*, 231–251.

tragic prize only five times. Whatever want of popularity this may be taken to imply was due probably to the fact that the movements with which he was in sympathy only came to triumph in later times. The story that, when called upon by an audience to alter something in one of his plays, he said he wrote tragedies for their instruction, not his, is intrinsically improbable, and cannot be taken as showing the relations which existed between Euripides and his public; for we know that the *Hippolytus*, which we have, was constructed with a view to avoid the faults that had caused the failure of an earlier play by Euripides on the same subject.

If on many social and speculative questions Euripides was too far ahead of his time to be in harmony with it, in his patriotism at least he was at one with the Athenians of his day. Although he took no part in the internal politics of Athens, and utters no sentiment on them beyond the proud loyalty to her republican constitution and her history which also finds expression in Sophocles,[1] he takes a keen interest in Athenian foreign politics. After the *Hecuba*, the date of which is fixed to be B.C. 425 by the allusion in line 462 to the purification of Delos, and by the parody of line 174 in the *Clouds*, 1165, the next three plays which we possess, the *Andromache*, the *Suppliants*, and the *Heraclidæ*, all have a political object for their prime motive and belong to the period of B.C. 424—B.C. 418. The *Andromache* is an attack upon Sparta, and the other two plays were designed to promote or to confirm the alliance which Athens concluded with Argos in B.C. 420. The next four plays whose dates are known to us are the *Troades*, B.C. 415; the *Helena*, B.C. 412; the *Phœnissæ*, B.C. 411; and the *Orestes*, B.C. 408. When the *Ion*, the *Hercules Furens*, the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, or the *Electra* was produced we do not know, though on grounds of style and metre various dates have been assigned to them. The date is also unknown of the *Cyclops*, the only surviving specimen of the satyric drama.

In B.C. 409 Euripides went, for what reason we do not know, to the court of Archelaus, king of Macedonia. There he produced the *Archelaus* in honour of his royal host; and there too

[1] He represents Athens as growing great by her chivalrous defence of the weak in the *Suppliants* and the *Heraclidæ*, and sums up the philosophy of her growth in the words ἐν τοῖς πόνοισιν αὔξεται, *Supp.* 323. The introduction of Theseus into the *Medea*, the myth of which has no connection with Athens, the conclusion of the *Orestes* and of the *Hercules Furens*, are other instances of Euripides' patriotism. *Cf.* also *Hec.* 464: *Tro.* 210, 216, 220, 980; *Orest.* 1666; *Heracl.* 183; *Ion*, 192, 272, 281, 683; *Herc. Fur.* 477, 1409.

he wrote the *Bacchæ*. The subject of this play, which is a celebration of the power of Dionysus, was doubtless suggested to Euripides by his visit to a country in which the worship of the god greatly flourished. The *Bacchæ* is not only interesting as the only surviving play which has the cult of Dionysus for its subject, but is also, from the point of view of art, one of the finest of Greek tragedies. It further has an interest as showing, that although Euripides felt deeply the inconsistencies and the frequent immorality of polytheism,[1] he never so utterly abandoned the religion of his country as to find it impossible to acquiesce in at least some part of traditional religion. In this respect, as in others, Euripides faithfully mirrors the life of Athens. The difficulties which he felt with regard to polytheism were not felt by him alone; and although, as might be expected from a friend of Socrates, he occasionally attained to higher conceptions,[2] still in not finally or wholly renouncing polytheism he is again the faithful exponent of his age. The *Bacchæ* and the *Iphigenia at Aulis*, were only put upon the Athenian stage after his death, which took place in Macedonia in B.C. 406.

The popularity of Euripides was in ancient times very great. His plays were performed even in Parthia, and many of the Athenians who became prisoners in Sicily after the disastrous termination of the Sicilian expedition, regained their liberty if they were able to recite from Euripides' works. He is referred to and quoted frequently by ancient writers; and although the fact that he is much quoted by composers of anthologies and such works tends to show that his popularity was partly due to the ease with which general reflections, aphorisms, &c., might be detached from his works, still, on the other hand, the

[1] *E.g. Herc. Fur.* 344, 1341; *Ion*, 444; *Iph. T.* 380. There are many such passages; but to imagine that Euripides is always covertly ridiculing the myths which were almost necessarily the subjects of his plays, and that Euripides' plays were designed for two audiences—for the ignorant crowd, who did not see any of the poet's mockery, and for the author's fellow-sceptics in the audience, who enjoyed the mockery—is going too far. It is the logical consequence of such criticism that a German writer maintains that the *Bacchæ* is a burlesque—a parody on the poet's enemy, Aristophanes, and a travesty of the worship of Dionysus.

[2] *E.g.* Frag. 960 (Nauck):—

Θεὸν δὲ ποῖον εἰπέ μοι νοητέον;
τὸν πάνθ' ὁρῶντα κ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ὁρώμενον.

Or Frag. 968:—

ποῖος δ' ἂν οἶκος τεκτόνων πλασθεὶς ὕπο
δέμας τὸ θεῖον περιβάλοι τοίχων πτυχαῖς;

approval of Virgil,[1] Horace,[2] Ovid,[3] or Theocritus[4] must be set in Euripides' favour. The popularity which is manifested by quotations is evidence to a certain extent that in Euripides the harmony of the whole is sacrificed to the beauty of the parts; but the popularity which is testified to by the fact that considerably more plays of Euripides have been preserved than of Æschylus and Sophocles together, is evidence that Euripides was appreciated both as a tragedian and as a poet. Further, the artistic beauty of his situations in themselves is shown by the numerous works of art inspired by his tragedies.[5] His popularity is in part doubtless due to his "anticipating the spirit of the age," although the *Bacchæ*, which, as far as we know, was the most popular of his plays, is in motive and treatment rather behind than in advance of the poet's time. However, it is true that Euripides' sympathies were with advanced ideas. His association with Socrates brought him into connection with the movement which was about to impart a new direction to philosophy, and to make Greek thought not only *Greek*, but universal. In the controversy with regard to slavery, which Aristotle incidentally shows existed in his time,[6] Euripides had already taken the side of the slaves.[7] Above all, Euripides strove hard to inspire the Greeks with humanity. In that respect he rose to a height attained neither by Æschylus, Sophocles, nor any poet among his predecessors.[8]

[1] *Æn.* iv. 301, 469 *et seq.*, vii. 385 *et seq.*

[2] *Odes*, II. xix., III. i. 1–14. xxv.; *Sat.* II. iii. 302; *Ep.* I. xvi. 73.

[3] *Met.* iii. 511 *et seq.*, iv. 1 *et seq.*, vi. 587 *et seq.*

[4] xxvi. Euripides is also alluded to in Catullus, lxiii. 23, lxiv. 61, 252 *et seq.*; Propertius, III. xvii. 24, xxii. 35; Persius, i. 100; Seneca, *Œd.* 404; Statius, *Theb.* iv. 565 *et seq.*

[5] *E.g.* scenes from the *Hippolytus* are found in the sarcophagus from Agrigentum and on a relief in the Louvre; from the *Hecuba* on a Lucanian vase. Timomachus painted subjects from the *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Medea*. Scopas sculptured a Bacchante from the description in the *Bacchæ*, and the Farnese bull represents a scene from the *Antiope*. Twenty-three of Euripides' plays furnish subjects for painting or sculpture to our knowledge, and probably the number would be increased if we knew more about the lost plays.

[6] Ar. *Pol.* i. c. 3, p. 1253b, 14 and 20.

[7] See *Andr.* 82, 89, 136 *seq.*, 155 *seq.*, 186 *seq.*; *Phœn.* 392; *Iph. Aul.* 313; *Ion*, 674, 854; *Orest.* 1522; *Hec.* 291. 348 *seq.*, 358; *Troad.* 302, 489 *seq.*; *Hel.* 1640, 726, 744; *Alc.* 138, 918. He sees plainly that slaves have faults, but that is due to their slavery. *El.* 633; *Orest.* 1115, 1522; *Ion*, 983; and *Frag.* 49, 50, 52, 253, 690, 966.

[8] Not only does he maintain that a slave may be the equal of his master in point of worth, and frequently show that it was due solely to the cruel accidents of war that men and women were enslaved, but he is never weary of dwelling on the horrors of war, and of demonstrating to his audience that a man or woman need not be a Greek to suffer and to deserve sympathy. *E.g.* the *Hecuba* and the *Medea*. In the latter play, not only does Euripides, the

But if, on the one hand, Euripides owes some of his success to his anticipation of the spirit of the age, on the other hand, it is to this very cause that most of his faults must be attributed. He exhibits all the awkwardness and defects of a transition stage. If Sophocles laid his scenes in "a past which never was present," he at any rate adhered to his imaginary period with fidelity. But Euripides lays his scenes in a time which is neither past nor present, but an incongruous and impossible epoch, in which Theseus defends the republican institutions of Athens,[1] and Hecuba regrets the high price of Sophists' lectures.[2] Euripides was impelled towards reality by a true instinct and by dramatic feeling, but it was impossible for him to discard myths as the subjects of his plays, and on no other condition could the reality he wished to depict be attained. At the same time, if the history of tragedy and of art drove him in the direction of real life, comedy already fully occupied the field on which he wished to enter.

If now, commencing with the plot, we proceed to examine the elements of the Euripidean drama, we shall find that throughout Euripides is hampered, and is conscious that he is hampered, by a tradition which he feels is antiquated, but has not the power entirely to abandon.

The two most obvious changes or additions which Euripides introduced with regard to the plot are the prologue[3] and the "*deus ex machina*" to assist the dénoûment.[4] The prologue is generally spoken by one of the characters taking part in the play, although occasionally, as, for instance, in the *Hecuba*, by

woman-hater, show that the woman is right and the man wrong (a paradox which he insists on in the chorus of 410), but he also claims sympathy for the "barbarian" woman against her Greek lover.

[1] *Supp.* 405 *et seq.*

[2] *Hec.* 816.

[3] A πρόλογος in the Greek sense (Arist. *Poet.* xii. ἔστι δὲ πρόλογος μὲν μέρος ὅλον τραγῳδίας τὸ πρὸ χοροῦ παρόδου) is to be found in Æschylus and Sophocles, and in both poets the πρόλογος includes an exposition of those facts which it is necessary that the spectator should be put in possession of. But Æschylus and Sophocles contrive to give the spectator this information by means of soliloquies (*e.g.* the *Agamemnon*, *Choephori*, and *Eumenides* of Æschylus; the *Trachiniæ* of Sophocles does not begin with a soliloquy) or dialogue, which are so natural or necessary to the action of the play as not to have the appearance of being devised for the benefit of the audience. (This, however, cannot be said of the two earliest plays of Æschylus, the *Persæ* and the *Suppliants*, which have no πρόλογος, and a very artificial exposition.) Euripides, however, gives up all attempt at dramatic illusion, and puts into the mouth of an actor a narrative, the avowed object of which is the enlightenment of the audience.

[4] The *Philoctetes* is terminated by means of a "*deus ex machina*," but here Sophocles was possibly taking a hint from Euripides.

a character who does not again appear. Frequently the prologue is something considerably more than what we understand by a prologue, that is to say, it not only includes a narration of those events of which a knowledge is requisite for the appreciation of the play, but also gives a sketch of the plot of the play. Sometimes, however, as in the *Electra* or the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the prologue contains no foreshadowing of the play, and gives no information which could not, in the absence of the prologue, be inferred from the play as it proceeds.

The object with which the *deus ex machina* is made to intervene is tolerably apparent. The poet thus gains much time which would otherwise be spent in unravelling the plot. This on the whole is probably also the object with which the prologue is written. Even when the prologue sketches the play which is to follow, Euripides only gives the myth as it was generally known. The particular means by which the various events notified by the prologue are to be brought about are, of course, not alluded to. In both cases the motive seems to have been to give as little time as possible to the myth as traditionally related, in order to concentrate attention on the incidents and situations of Euripides' own making. Euripides could not throw off the myths altogether, but got rid of them as much as possible by relegating them to the prologue and to the *deus ex machina*. Whatever the motive with which these two devices were used, they are none the less bad art;[1] and although historically they may have been demanded by circumstances, this is a consideration which explains but hardly justifies them. Setting aside the prologue and this form of dénoûment, we cannot but be amazed at the interest which Euripides contrives to put into his plots. There is an excitement about them which is not to be found in Sophocles, nor to be looked for in Æschylus. The inventiveness and fertility of Euripides in this respect shows his technical skill as a playwright. These remarks, it must be noticed, are not intended to apply to all the dramas of Euripides, though they do apply to those which are characteristic of him. It is almost impossible to make any one assertion which shall be true of all his plays, so much does he vary. Not being separated by time from the form of the drama which precedes his own, but seeing it year after year put

[1] The soliloquy which opens the *Medea* must be excepted from this criticism. Its quality is comparable with the opening of Sophocles' *Trachiniæ* (which is almost indistinguishable from a soliloquy, although it is addressed to Deianira's household slaves), and it shows that Euripides, although he generally employed the more bald form of prologue, was capable of a simple, effective, and artistic exposition.

on the stage by Sophocles, Euripides did not experience the difficulty which would be felt by an author endeavouring to go back to a style of composition which had ceased to be practised. On the contrary, in the drama of Sophocles Euripides saw a method of composition living with success, which it was competent for him to try, and which he did try. Hence it is that we have from Euripides plays such as the *Heraclidæ*, the *Supplices*, the *Hecuba*, &c., which do not rely upon exciting the spectator's curiosity, but depend for their interest on the pity, or, in the case of the *Bacchæ*, on the religious sentiment which they evoke. But his powers are not limited to any one or to some few resources; they extend to all the resources of tragic art. Exciting plots, as in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, terror, as in the *Hercules Furens* or the *Medea*, pathos of the purest and most simple kind, as in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*, the *Alcestis*, and many other plays, constitute the excellence of Euripides. His character-drawing is in some cases of the highest kind, but he frequently sacrifices consistency in the delineation of character to the temptation of producing a striking situation; or perhaps it is more accurate to say that he did not possess the power which marks Sophocles of conceiving a character whose actions naturally and necessarily result in impressive situations. Euripides possesses the technical skill of the playwright to a much greater extent than he possesses the genius of the dramatist.

There are plays of Euripides in which the chorus discharges the functions of sympathy and comment in the same way, and with as little awkwardness, as in Sophocles. Such plays are the *Bacchæ*, the *Heraclidæ*, and the *Hecuba*. In the *Ion*, indeed, the chorus is made to take an important share in the action of the drama by revealing Xuthus' intentions with regard to Ion, and thus the central event of the play, the attempted murder of Ion by his mother, is brought about. But in spite of these exceptions, it is characteristic of Euripides that he feels (and makes little attempt to conceal) that the chorus is a clog on the development of a play. Even Sophocles had found that the continual presence of the chorus throughout a tragedy was inconsistent with ends and effects which a poet may legitimately endeavour to attain, and in the *Ajax* Sophocles boldly dismisses the chorus from the stage, in order that Ajax may deliver his famous soliloquy. It is strange that although Euripides himself repeats this experiment in the *Alcestis* and the *Helena*, he never developed it into a regular practice. The strength of tradition was so great in this case, that Euripides, rather than break

through it, retained the chorus even when its presence produced effects the most inartistic. There are many occurrences in real life which are fit subjects for dramatic representation, but are not such as are conducted in the presence of twelve or fifteen comparative strangers. Although even the private life of an Athenian was considerably more public than is modern private life, Euripides, whose strength lies in domestic scenes, was likely to find the chorus a greater difficulty than did Sophocles. At the same time, the surprises and complications which he aimed at producing by the construction of his plots were, by the continual presence of the chorus, rendered difficult to obtain. Thus, in the *Hippolytus*, the chorus, who have been present when Phædra declares her passion for Hippolytus to the nurse, and who consequently know that the charge made by Phædra against Hippolytus is untrue, do not tell the truth and save Theseus from causing his son's death, because they have been sworn to secrecy. Euripides adopts the same stage device in the *Medea* to account for the chorus not revealing Medea's designs of murder. In the *Electra*, Euripides does not take the trouble even to administer the oath of secrecy to the chorus, but says that they will keep the secret. The value of the chorus' oath in Euripides' eyes is shown by the readiness with which they break it when necessary, as in the *Hippolytus*. It is not, therefore, surprising that in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* Euripides abandons all attempt at dramatic illusion, and allows the chorus to be present at a secret interview between Agamemnon and Menelaus, without reference to the fact that the chorus would naturally reveal what it knew to Clytemestra and Iphigenia.

In Sophocles the continual presence of the chorus is rendered plausible, because the chorus is placed in relations of sympathy or confidence with some leading character (with the heroine in the *Electra*, or with the character opposed to the heroine in the *Antigone*), who occupies the stage almost continually.[1] Owing to the more intricate plots of Euripides, it is almost impossible for one character to remain perpetually present on the stage; plans and events have to be revealed to the spectator which must be concealed from the hero, and thus the chorus, which still in Euripides continues to stand in a closer relation to the hero than to any other character, is frequently left, by the necessary absences of the hero, in an isolated and somewhat false position, as is the case in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*.

[1] In the *Philoctetes* Sophocles made the chorus consist of sailors, thus departing from tradition, obviously because, as Neoptolemus, not Philoctetes, occupies the stage continuously, the chorus must be attached to the former.

As the presence of the chorus is without effect on the action of the play, so the odes assigned to it have usually in Euripides little to do with the subject of the play. They often bear no special relation to the scene which has preceded, and occasionally have no reference to anything in the play. Euripides thus closely approaches the practice of later dramatists, whose choral odes might be with equal propriety sung in any play, and were merely designed to afford the spectator that relief which is given in modern times by an interval between the acts.[1] In Euripides the choral odes are poems, which rely on their intrinsic beauty as poetry rather than on the interest which attaches to expressions of the poet's own opinions on religious and moral questions. Æschylus frequently conveyed his opinions on such subjects through the odes of the chorus, but Euripides distributes the duty of expressing his views among all his characters impartially; and hence we have slaves, kings, and heroines, all uttering sentiments admirable in themselves, although somewhat frigid and unnatural under the circumstances.

The constraints of a transition period which cramp Euripides elsewhere have left their mark upon his character-drawing also. Compelled by the tradition of the tragic art to take his subjects from mythology, Euripides was impelled by his instinct as an artist to draw his characters from real life; and to present the heroes of mythology acting from everyday motives and with everyday feelings, was to attempt in most cases an impossible fusion. The slaying of Clytemestra by Orestes is a proper subject for the art of Sophocles or Æschylus, but is wholly unsuited to the new form of art which Euripides was making for. To the Greeks, accustomed to the figures of Sophocles or Æschylus, it must have seemed, as it seemed to Aristotle, that the *dramatis personæ* of Euripides often had characters unnecessarily bad. In his endeavours to substitute truth to nature for truth to literary tradition, Euripides had to work upon materials and with tools not designed for the effects which he wished to produce. It is, then, striking proof of his power that he rose above all these obstacles, and gave to the world such triumphs of character-drawing as his Alcestis, Medea, or Iphigenia. He depicts the madness of Hercules and the passion of Phædra with the force and intensity of a master; and it is true that, great as Euripides is in the anatomy, he is still greater in the pathology

[1] "The performers in the orchestra of a modern theatre are little, I believe, aware that they occupy the place, and may consider themselves as the lineal descendants, of the ancient chorus."—*Twining's Aristotle*, p. 103 n.

of the soul. But love and madness are not the only emotions which he is capable of representing, and if Phædra is a subject which is "neither morally nor artistically pure,"[1] Alcestis may be quoted to prove the power and the purity of Euripides both morally and artistically. It remains true, however, that Euripides is in artistic purity, as in character-drawing, inferior to Sophocles, and in genius inferior to both Sophocles and Æschylus. The discords which exist in Euripides' plays between his character-drawing and his situations, between his sentiments and his mythical subjects, between the necessities of his plots and the presence of the chorus, are discords which Sophocles avoided and Euripides could not or would not convert into harmonies.

Euripides' style is characterised by a smoothness and polish which imply much hard work. In point of vocabulary, Euripides made a greater advance towards the ordinary Attic of the day than Sophocles had done. In respect also of expression and imagery, Euripides adopts a style far less exalted than that of Sophocles or Æschylus. This difference in style between Euripides and the two older tragedians is quite in keeping with the difference between their art and the newer form for which Euripides was preparing the way. If there are truths which demand lofty language for their proper expression, there are also truths which require more precise enunciation; and there are few emotions for which the simplest words are not the best utterance. In the pleadings of an Iphigenia, the self-sacrifice of a Macaria, the sorrows of an Andromache, we want no wealth of words or luxury of ideas to stand between us and the beauty of the character. Euripides, being an artist, appreciated the worth of simplicity. The metaphors and similes of Æschylus are drawn mostly from nature—from pugnacious nature. Those of Sophocles are also drawn from nature, but from her more peaceful aspect. In Euripides we meet with similes and metaphors from art,[2] showing at once the poet's susceptibility, and the effect which the Athens of Pericles made upon the citizens of Athens.

The fragments of Euripides' lost plays which are to be found in various anthologists, grammarians, lexicographers, and others are more numerous than those either of Æschylus or Sophocles.

[1] Mommsen, Hist. of Rome, ii. 451.

[2] *E.g.* from architecture, *Alc.* 311, 457, *Med.* 390, *Or.* 1203, *Cycl.* 352, 353, 477, *Tro.* 489, *Phœn.* 84, *Hel.* 44, 605, *Iph. Taur.* 1462, Frag. 362, 779; from sculpture, *Hec.* 561, Frag. 124; from painting, *Hel.* 255, *Hec.* 807.

The best known is "Evil communications corrupt good manners."[1] The knowledge of human nature which is shown in this famous fragment appears again in a fragment of the *Alcmene*, which declares the need of wisdom in the hour of prosperity,[2] and in another which says that "most evils are of men's own doing."[3] The same knowledge takes a somewhat cynical turn when he says in the *Cretan Women*[4] that "all men are friendly to the wealthy." But the poet's own heart was sound, for in the *Dictys*[5] he notices that the poor are oftener wiser than the wealthy, and often more pious with their scanty offerings than the rich with their offerings of bulls. His faith in the right shines out often in the fragments. "Gold and silver are not the only currency," he says in the *Œdipus*;[6] "Virtue is current everywhere." Justice may limp—"claudo pede"—but she overtakes the wrong-doer;[7] and all evil deeds must out, he says in the *Melanippe*.[8] This faith in morality could not fail to have its effect on his religious beliefs, and we find in the *Œnomaus*,[9] "When I see the wicked fall, then I say there are gods." And although he does formulate the somewhat transcendentalist tenet that "the god in each man is his mind,"[10] at other times in a more ordinary strain he says, "Without God there is no prosperity for man,"[11] and "the ways of Heaven are mysterious."[12] Among the fragments are many relating to women; and although we find such statements in the *Œdipus* as that "every wife is worse than her husband, should the worst man marry the best,"[13] and in the *Alope* that educating women is a mistake, because "the well-educated deceive us more than the neglected;"[14] still elsewhere, in the *Melanippe*, he says that "though there is nothing worse than a bad woman, there is nothing better than a good one."[15] With sound common sense he declares in the *Protesilaus* that a man who classes all women together is a fool; some are good and some bad;[16] and elsewhere that all men are not unlucky in marriage any more than all men are lucky; it depends on the wife a man gets;[17] and in the *Melanippe* that "bad women have given a bad name to the whole sex."[18] What Euripides thought of marriage with a good wife we may see from such passages as this from the *Antigone*,[19] "A man's best possession is a sympathetic wife," and "A loving husband is

[1] Nauck, T. G. F. 1013. [2] Ib. 100. [3] Ib. 1015. [4] Ib. 465.
[5] Ib. 329, 940. [6] Ib. 546. [7] Ib. 969. [8] Ib. 509. [9] Ib. 581.
[10] Ib. 1007. [11] Ib. 1014. [12] Ib. 941. [13] Ib. 550. [14] Ib. 112.
[15] Ib. 497. [16] Ib. 658. [17] Ib. 1042. [18] Ib. 496. [19] Ib. 164.

a woman's wealth."[1] In the *Phrixus*,[2] too, he dwells on the charms of a wife's ministrations in times of sickness and distress, and elsewhere[3] on the influence of a good wife in saving the home which a dissolute husband would otherwise ruin. In the *Dictys*[4] he has verses on the happiness of paternal, and in the *Erechtheus*[5] of maternal love. It is consistent with his just remarks on marriage that both in the *Antiope*[6] and in the *Œdipus*[7] he says that beauty in a woman without nobility of mind is little worth. Elsewhere—in the *Melanippe*[8]—he is fatalistic: marriages are made in heaven, and it is useless to go against destiny. His fatalism comes out also in the *Peliades*,[9] where his advice is "not to kick against the pricks." On the subject of slavery Euripides' utterances in the fragments are divided. In the *Phrixus*[10] he says, "All that is disgraceful in many slaves is the name: in mind they are often less slavish than the free." But in the *Alcmeon*,[11] "Whoso trusts a slave is a fool." The problems of heredity seem to have exercised his mind: good men have good sons,[12] and a good child cannot come of a bad father.[13] On the other hand, you may have a fine child from inferior parents, he says in the *Meleager*.[14] Good birth he thinks inferior to good acts:[15] and in the *Alcmene*[16] we have a partial Greek translation for *noblesse oblige*.

The only member of the "school" of Euripides who is mentioned to us is the nephew Euripides, who, after his uncle's death, brought out the *Iphigenia at Aulis*, the *Alcmæon*, and the *Bacchæ*, and won the prize with them. He is said also to have written tragedies himself, but we know nothing of them, and, indeed, are uncertain whether this Euripides was the nephew or the son of the famous poet.

Four years older than Euripides, and a rival of Euripides and Sophocles, was Achæus of Eretria. Of his life we know nothing except that he once won the tragic prize; and since he is not mentioned by Aristophanes in the *Frogs* as among the survivors of Sophocles, it has been inferred that he had died before the production of that comedy. His satyric dramas, the titles of seven of which have come down to us, are said to have been in the first rank. The subjects of several of his tragedies are taken from the Cyclic poets, *e.g.* his *Adrastus*, *Œdipus*, *Pirithous*, and *Philoctetes*; and in his *Theseus* he paid Athens the compliment of selecting an Attic myth. His style is apt to become

[1] Nauck, 1047. [2] Ib. 819. [3] Ib. 1041. [4] Ib. 333.
[5] Ib. 360. [6] Ib. 211. [7] Ib. 552. [8] Ib. 503.
[9] Ib. 607. [10] Ib. 828; *cf.* 515. [11] Ib. 87. [12] Ib. 76.
[13] Ib. 344. [14] Ib. 531. [15] Ib. 9. [16] Ib. 99.

obscure, his diction is ornate and sometimes artificial, his descriptions minute, and pushed rather too far.

The greatest, however, of Euripides' rivals was the Athenian Agathon. Born probably about B.C. 447, Agathon was a man of education and refinement. His natural abilities at an early age impressed Socrates, and the charm of his character secured him the friendship of Plato, whose *Symposium* was written to celebrate Agathon's victory in the tragic contest of B.C. 416. The time of his death is uncertain, but fell about B.C. 400. Placed by the Alexandrine grammarians in their canon amongst the first tragedians, he probably ranked next to the Three. Aristotle not only mentions him several times in the *Poetics*, but testifies practically to his merit, and shows his own fondness for this tragedian by the frequency with which he quotes him in the *Ethics* and the *Rhetoric*. Agathon's power as a tragedian is shown by the freedom with which he treated the chorus, the music, and the subjects of the drama. The musical innovations which he made it is impossible for us to appreciate, though the songs which Aristophanes makes him sing in the *Thesmophoriazusæ* exemplified his changes in the music of the drama. With regard to the chorus, we know that he first composed odes capable of being sung with equal appropriateness in any drama whatever, and thus these choruses[1] came to serve only the same purpose as the music of the orchestra between the acts in a modern theatre. In his selection of subjects he had the courage to execute what Euripides had only the power to conceive. That is, he, at any rate in the *Anthos* (if this was the name of the piece), abandoned the domains of myth and history entirely, and composed a tragedy which was original in its subject as well as in its treatment. In this proceeding he shows the influence of the circumstances in which he found himself. All that could be made out of the myths suitable for the stage had already been drawn from them by his predecessors, and he was thus compelled either to have recourse to his own imagination for a subject, as he did with success in the case of the *Anthos*, or to crowd into one play mythical incidents enough to have furnished forth half-a-dozen dramas in earlier times,—a proceeding which, according to Aristotle, proved fatal to one play (unnamed) of Agathon's, otherwise not unworthy of success. Agathon's style also, as was natural in an admirer of Gorgias, shows traces of the fatal influence which rhetoric was beginning to assert over the drama. Antitheses and plays upon thoughts and words, for instance, are frequent.

[1] ἐμβόλιμα.

Amongst other contemporaries of Euripides may be mentioned Aristarchus, who is said to have lived a hundred years, to have written a hundred tragedies, and to have won the prize twice; Morychus, Acestor, Gnesippus, Hieronymus, Nothippus, Sthenelus, Spintharus, Cleophon, Theognis, Nicomachus, who defeated Euripides once, Pythangelus, Pantacles, and, finally, Critias, the chief of the Thirty Tyrants. We have a long fragment of the *Sisyphus* of Critias, which in ancient times was attributed doubtfully to Euripides. The grounds for this seem to have been an inadequate appreciation of Euripides' religious opinions, and an erroneous assumption that no tragedian but Euripides could have doubts on religion. The passage in question makes the gods to be an invention of state-craft, designed for the prevention of offences which elude the law. That such a dissertation could have any artistic appropriateness in a tragedy is impossible, and it serves to show the value of the drama of the time. The style of the fragment is clear, but scarcely poetical; the metre is exceedingly lax.

The tragedians of the fourth century are little more than names to us, as, for instance, Mamercus, Apollodorus, Timesitheus, and Dicæogenes. The elder Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, devoted himself with much zeal to the drama, and had some of his tragedies put upon the Athenian stage in a manner regardless of expense, to the great amusement of the Athenians.[1] Of more merit as a tragedian was Antiphon (not the orator), who is quoted, as though generally known, by Aristotle. Rhetoricians, such as Aphareus and Theodectes, continued to be imported into the ranks of the tragedians. Both Theodectes and Aphareus were pupils of Isocrates. The style of the former was correct and elegant, and his metre exceedingly free. As was to be expected, he developed the rhetorical element in tragedy to a considerable extent, and being throughout an orator rather than a poet, he not unnaturally conceived numerous scenes in the spirit rather of the law-court than of the stage. Aristotle seems to have been well acquainted with his works, for at different times he mentions seven of his tragedies. Finally, we must mention Chæremon, one of the "Reading Tragedians."[2] Among the symptoms of the decline of tragedy is over-refinement and a striving after literary effects which cannot be

[1] Dionysius' claims to be considered a poet may be judged by the words he coined. His epithet for a maid was *μέναδρος*, because a maid is on the look-out, *μένει*, for a husband, *ἄνδρα*. Mouse-holes were *μυστήρια*, since it is there that a mouse, *μῦς*, watches, *τηρεῖ*.

[2] *Ἀναγνωστικοί*.

legitimately obtained on the stage. At Athens the result was seen in the composition of plays not intended for the stage, but for reading. The disease showed itself not only in tragedy, but in the dithyramb; and poets whose works were not written to be acted or sung by the dithyrambic chorus, but by their fineness and detail were designed for a smaller and more critical audience, were called Readers. It seems, however, that Chæremon also wrote acting plays. Indeed, he seems not to have confined himself to any one kind of poetry, and, further, to have invented a kind of his own, for his *Centaur*, which was a medley of all kinds of metre, is sometimes called a tragedy, sometimes a rhapsody, and sometimes an epic, and so may be inferred to have comprised features peculiar to each of those forms of composition.

The forces of disintegration were at work on the drama in the time of Euripides, as we have seen above. He felt them and recognised them, but the power and genius with which he controlled them would be much better appreciated if we only had a complete work of one of his successors to show us the contrast between Euripides and the dramatists who followed him.

Rhetoric invaded tragedy with more and more success, and culminated in the work of Theodectes, who combined the pathos of Euripides with the finish of Isocrates. Learning and philosophy replace creative power and technical knowledge. Incapacity for the real work of tragedy led to the insertion of what was good, and even beautiful, but not appropriate. Individuality and distinctive characteristics are wanting, for political exhaustion was accompanied by a tendency to mechanical and routine work. Because the strength to deal with a tragedy as a whole was lacking, attention was paid more and more to detail, much labour was bestowed on trivialities of thought and of expression, and as a result work became finer but feebler. When genius ceases, ingenuity begins.

CHAPTER V.

COMEDY: ORIGIN AND GROWTH.

THE Greeks were not much given to the scientific investigation of the early history of institutions, and it is matter rather for regret than for surprise that Aristotle should complain that little

or nothing was known about the early history of comedy. Even in his time, however, as may be inferred from the *Poetics*, the "invention" of comedy was claimed both by the Athenians and the Megarians, and the dispute renders it still further necessary to exercise reserve in accepting the various statements on this subject made by ancient authorities. If we proceed to investigate the growth, and renounce the investigation of the "invention" of comedy, we shall see that the germs of comedy are of two kinds, and that these germs may be found amongst various members of the Greek race.

As tragedy sprang from the serious side of the worship of Dionysus, so comedy has its root in the joyous aspect of that ritual. When or how the phallus became associated with the feasts of Dionysus is uncertain; but, at least in Græco-Italian times, the Ithyphalli were to be found associated with the worshippers of Dionysus, and phallic songs were amongst the modes by which they expressed the joy of their worship. In later times this rude worship, practically dropped by the inhabitants of towns, survived only in the villages—*Komai*—and hence the name of comedy. With regard to the phallic songs we know nothing. Probably they were sung in strophes by a double chorus, and in matter and style were appropriate to the subject. As Aristotle says that comedy was the creation of the leaders of these phallic choruses, it is not improbable that the choruses were originally followed by a monody from the leader of the chorus. This monody was derisive and abusive in character, and was directed against any person, whether unpopular or merely conspicuous, who was regarded as a subject likely to excite the laughter of the crowd.

The other root of comedy is to be found in the mimetic dances which were practised by many of the Greeks. These dances, though not confined to the festivals of Dionysus, were particularly characteristic of them. The Spartans developed these performances to a considerable extent, and took great delight in dances representing the robbery of fruit from orchards or meat from the Syssitia, with the discovery of the offender and his behaviour under the consequent penalties. These performances were not always limited to dumb show, for the performers[1] represented also foreign quack-doctors, and in this case the humour consisted in the fact that they were supposed to gain the preference over native doctors simply because they gave foreign names to their drugs.

[1] These performers were called in Sparta *δεικηλισταί*; in Italy, *φλύακες*; in Thebes, *θθελοντοί*; in Sicily, *αὐτοκάβδαλοι*.

Such were the germs of comedy that were to be found in various parts of Greece. For their development two conditions were necessary. The first was, that there should be enough political freedom to allow the trivial and personal abuse of the Phallica to take on a political interest. The second condition was, that the country worship of Dionysus should be taken in hand and celebrated under the guidance of the state. The first state apparently to realise the former condition was Megara, and the expulsion of the tyrant Theagenes in the sixth century was followed by a rapid development of comedy. The monody of the leader of the chorus was developed into a dialogue between the chorus and its leader, and eventually this dialogue was invested with some dramatic form. The precise nature of these short farces it is impossible to ascertain. Their literary value cannot have been great, for Megarian comedy has left no traces of any literary representative. Mæson of Megara is said to have invented two masks, that of a slave and that of a cook. This indicates, not only the nature of the figures out of which the fun of these farces was obtained, but that the characters were of fixed and traditional types.

Although the Athenians affected to despise the stupidity of Megarian farces, Athenian comedy was influenced by them to no small extent in its origin. Susarion, to whom the "invention" of Attic comedy was ascribed by the Greeks, was a Megarian, and probably transferred to Attic soil the comedy of his native state. To what stage of development Megarian comedy had attained in the time of Susarion is uncertain. The plays of Susarion were never committed to writing, and there is no good authority for supposing even that they were in verse. They were not wholly extempore: Susarion probably communicated beforehand to his actors the general outline, and arranged with them the principal situations. The rest would be left mainly to the inspiration of the moment. The result would be a concatenation of loosely connected scenes of a broad and burlesque description.

The conditions, however, in Athens at this time were not favourable for the development of comedy. The rule of the Pisistratidæ did not admit of that political interest which, as the subsequent history of comedy at Athens showed, was necessary to produce the action and reaction of poet and public indispensable for the growth of art. During this period of (for comedy) depression at Athens, we must look to Sicily for the next stage of development.

The Sicilians seem at all times to have been a merry people.

In later times even the grinding weight of Roman government and the oppressions of a Verres could not rob the light-hearted Sicilians of their enjoyment of, and capacity for, a joke. Here, as elsewhere in Hellas, mimetic dances existed, and the names —though little more—of an immense number of them have come down to us. Indeed, Theophrastus ascribed the invention of dancing to a Sicilian. There was, however, if the evidence of vases is rightly interpreted, existing in Sicily—and particularly at Tarentum in Lower Italy—another source of comedy, and that was the practice of parodying myths. In later times the actors of these parodies attained great celebrity, and were much patronised at the courts of Alexander and the Diadochæ. The best known name is that of Rhinthon. He was a Tarentine of the time of the first Ptolemy, and composed thirty-eight of these parodies. Blæsus, Sciras, and Sopater also were famous for this kind of performance.[1] But it is supposed that not only in these later days, but before the time of comedy, mythology was travestied. This interpretation of the evidence afforded by painted vases is, however, not beyond dispute. If it is correct, its importance is considerable, for in such travesties we have what is conspicuous by its absence in the early efforts of comedy —that is, a real dramatic element.

The development of comedy in Sicily was assisted not only by the disposition of a people naturally inclined to see the comic side of things, and by their dances and possibly travesties of myths, but also by the existence of a cultured and literary court in Syracuse.

It was under these conditions that Sicilian comedy originated. The three comedians of this island known to us, Dinolochus, Phormus, and Epicharmus, were probably not the only comedians to whom Sicily gave birth, but it is certain that all others were eclipsed by the last-mentioned, Epicharmus. Phormus, who is ranked by Aristotle with Epicharmus for his services to comedy, was tutor to the children of Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, wrote seven comedies, probably mythological travesties, and contributed some improvements to the costume of the actors and the decoration of the stage. Dinolochus is represented only by a few fragments.

Epicharmus was born in Cos some time between B.C. 540 and B.C. 532. When a few months old he was taken by his father, Helothales, to Megara in Sicily. There he spent most of his youth, and there the boy must have often witnessed the rudimentary farces which the Megarians of Sicily had brought with

[1] Called Παρατραγῳδία.



them from their mother country. It is also extremely probable that Megara was the scene of Epicharmus' own first attempts at comedy, though we only have direct evidence that he worked in Syracuse. Some time before this, however, he must have visited Magna Græcia, for he was a disciple of Pythagoras. Whether he attained to the esoteric circle of the famous philosopher or not, we cannot say, but the influence of Pythagoras on Epicharmus was considerable in extent, and lasting in its effects. Pythagoras died probably before B.C. 510, and, therefore, Epicharmus' acquaintance with him cannot be placed after that date. Megara was destroyed B.C. 485, and Epicharmus probably proceeded before then to Syracuse. There he worked, and there at an advanced age he died, probably shortly after the death of Hiero, B.C. 467.

The points in which the comedy of Epicharmus constitutes an advance on the rude farces of the Megarians are clear and of easy comprehension. The Megarian farces were not committed to writing. The comedy of Epicharmus has a permanent literary value. It is not certain, as already mentioned, that the former were even in verse, and at all times they were undoubtedly little more than improvisations. Epicharmus, on the other hand, was a poet, and his comedies were invested with literary form. Megarian comedy was extravagant, and its situations were connected in but the flimsiest manner. Epicharmus was possessed of psychological penetration, and he endued comedy with a plot and imparted unity to it. Finally, he did not confine himself merely to the absurd side of human nature, but gave expression to his reflections on life in the shape of moral sentiments.

Epicharmus did not attain to these high results immediately. His early efforts were probably in the spirit of the farces which, as a boy, he had witnessed in Sicilian Megara, and to this period must be assigned many of his parodies on mythology. Hephæstus is a comic figure even in Homer, and the *Comastæ* or *Hephæstus* of Epicharmus probably developed the comic side of the limping god's character to an extravagant extent. So, too, the adventures of Heracles with Pholus, which included much drinking on the part of Heracles, and much fighting on the part of everybody, seem to show that the *Heracles with Pholus* was distinguished rather by humour of a rough-and-ready description than by character-drawing or artistic plot. In this rude stage of comedy, however, Epicharmus was not destined to remain long. His poetical instinct, his powers of observation, and his æsthetic feelings, urged him to work of a

more refined kind, and his removal from Megara to Syracuse must have contributed to this result. The action of Syracuse on Epicharmus was twofold. It gave him a better public, and it introduced him to the literary circle of the court of Syracuse. The large population of this wealthy city probably possessed at this time the same generous appreciation for genius as it did in the time of Euripides. The literary circle of the court embraced all the most cultured men of Syracuse, as it also comprised all other Greeks of distinction whom Hiero could attract to Sicily. Under these favouring conditions Epicharmus proceeded to those comedies of character in which his real strength lay. All that was refined in his work, careful in its finish, and witty in conception and expression, was developed. But although studies of character, which, as the names of the plays indicate, were contained in his *Boor*[1] or his *Megarian Woman*, necessarily fall within Epicharmus' later and Syracusan period, when his observations of life had borne fruit, still they do not complete the sum of his activity at this period. Mythological travesties also give scope for artistic work. The figures in such plays are indeed gods, but their absurdities are those of men. In the heroes and gods of these parodies were parodied the Sicilians of Epicharmus' own time. This is obvious in the case of his play *Hebe's Wedding* (reproduced under the title of *The Muses*). The great and general wealth which under Gelo and Hiero rapidly spread among the Syracusans was not employed by them always in the best of directions, and the wealthy classes seem to have been particularly subject to gluttony. In *Hebe's Wedding* the central fact of the piece is the wedding-feast, and this is portrayed from all points of view as something which even the Syracusans must have allowed to be excessive. Naturally the bridegroom, Heracles, whose appetite was admitted in sober mythology, performed wonderful feats in the consumption of food. The Muses were brought on to the stage to subserve the leading idea of the piece. But the spectators, who were prepared to see the young and beauteous nymphs of Pimpleia and Pieria,[2] must have been overcome with amazement and amusement when they saw them appear as sturdy fishwives, bearing as their contributions to the feast innumerable fishes much prized by Syracusan gourmands. After this, the audience would not be surprised at witnessing

[1] Ἀγρωστῖνος = Attic ἀγροῖκος.

[2] In forms suggesting the notions conveyed by the words πίμ-πλημι and πίμ-πλημι rather than Pieria and Pimpleia.

Athene playing the flute and the Dioscuri executing a *pas de deux* of a comic character.

This sketch of *Hebe's Wedding* may enable us to comprehend the nature of Sicilian comedy as represented by Epicharmus. The introduction of the Dioscuri and Athene was episodic in character, and could have no strict connection with the plot. Like all other ancient comedy—indeed, like ancient tragedy—Sicilian comedy did not rely on the intrigues of a complicated plot, but contained one simple leading idea, round which various episodes and comic situations were grouped. The drama, the latest form of poetry to arise, was the longest to develop, and it is only in modern times that the plot, both in comedy and tragedy, has come to be the leading feature of a play. Further, Sicilian comedy was essentially burlesque, and *Hebe's Wedding* surprises us by its resemblance to modern burlesques on ancient mythology. But this was no peculiarity of Epicharmus; it is equally distinctive of Aristophanes and of the old Attic comedy in general. It was only in the course of time and of development that the burlesque character of old comedy was toned down to comedy in the modern sense. It may appear from this criticism that Epicharmus, after all, did not rise very much above the Megarian farces. But it must be remembered that the very same incidents and situations will serve to form merely a rude farce or a comedy of higher merits, according as they are or are not adequately motived and artistically woven together. The unity of a comedy of Epicharmus may be inferior to that of a comedy of Shakespeare, and yet may have been infinitely above that of Dorian comedy.

In the next place, *Hebe's Wedding* may help us to understand the strength of Epicharmian comedy. Its strength was the delineation of character. It is necessary, however, to premise that what, in this respect, holds good of Greek tragedy also holds good of Greek comedy. A character in Shakespeare is drawn not only with that truth to human nature which makes the picture the possession of all time; it is not only idealised, but it is individual and real as well as ideal, inasmuch as it is not a servile imitation, but an artistic representation of real life. To this combination of the real and the ideal ancient dramatists were forbidden, by the early place they held in the history of the drama, to attain. Epicharmus selects some folly or failing of human nature, and concentrates all the expression of that folly or failure in some one character. Such concentration does not, of course, occur in real life, and, therefore, when presented in comedy, is the result of comic idealisation. A

character of this kind is a type, and is not individual. As this is the nature of Epicharmus' character-drawing, it is obvious how suited to his purposes a mythological travesty might be. Thus, Heracles as a god was capable of an amount of gluttony which no Syracusan could hope to attain, and the traditional attributes of Heracles were such as this gluttony would not be out of harmony with, whereas the exaggeration would have been intolerable in the case of any human character.

If we now proceed to compare the comedy of Epicharmus with that of Aristophanes, the first and most obvious difference is that of range. Everything which had an interest for the citizens of a free state was material for Aristophanes, whereas Epicharmus was by his position excluded from politics.[1] Thus Epicharmus in his highest work was limited to the reproduction of Sicilian character and life. His characters are types of follies and faults. In Aristophanes, on the other hand, we have not types of character, but the personification of movements and of forces—a Socrates and a Demos. Aristophanes is distinguished by the boldness of reckless genius, Epicharmus by more minute work and psychological study. In Aristophanes we have nothing but what is essentially the negative side of comedy—ridicule. In Epicharmus we have much that is of a practical moral value. Aristophanes does his best poetical work in his lyrics. Epicharmus had no chorus—he certainly had no chorus in the Greek sense; no fragment of any choral ode from any comedy of his has come down to us. At the same time, it is probable that there was a chorus in such a play as *Hebe's Wedding*—a chorus, that is, resembling much more that of a modern comic opera than that of a Greek play. Such a chorus would be required for the wedding-song in *Hebe's Wedding*, for the revel in the *Hephæstus* or *Comastæ*, for the triumphal song in *Amycus*, and in all these cases, as, too, in the *Choreuontes*, such a chorus would naturally dance. But there are no traces that the chorus ever took part in the dialogue of any of Epicharmus' comedies.

This characteristic absence of a chorus, in the technical sense, from Sicilian comedy seems to show that the connection of the drama with Dionysus was not so strongly felt in Sicily as in Athens. The presence of the chorus in Attic drama would, in the absence of all other evidence, be enough to show the origin of the drama. Alongside of this absence of a chorus from

[1] It is true that it has been imagined that Epicharmus wrote politics in some of his comedies, but this is based only on a fragment of four words, the titles merely of two plays, and an insufficient remark of a scholiast.

Sicilian comedy we may place our ignorance of the occasions on which, and the persons by whom, plays were performed at Syracuse. As we do not know at what, if any, festivals they were produced, nor whether they were, as at Athens, under the direct and avowed control of the state, and as we do know that the mimetic dances, to which comedy was at least in part due, were by no means confined to, or distinctive of, the festivals of Dionysus, it is merely conjecture—supported, indeed, by the analogy of Attic drama—that Sicilian comedy is derived from the Dionysia. It is probable that more than three actors were required, but how many pieces were produced at a time, how many poets competed, or, indeed, whether there was any competition between the poets, are all points on which we have no information. The Syracusans must, however, have learned much from Æschylus, who, having done so much for the theatre and in the way of stage-management at Athens, would probably be helpful also to the Syracusan stage.

As for the influence of Epicharmus on his successors, it is probable that before Old Comedy definitely and finally assumed a political cast, some of the older poets—Crates is especially mentioned—were influenced by Epicharmus. In the case of the Middle and New Comedy, the traces of his influence are clear. He was the inventor of many types of character which persisted in later Attic Comedy. Thus the drunkard, the gourmand, the gourmet, and above all the parasite, are all types which, by their persistence, testify to the influence of Epicharmus.

Here we must say something of Sophron, if it is only to state that we know little, almost nothing, about him. He was a Syracusan who lived about B.C. 420. He composed Mimes, which were introduced into Athens by Plato. He did not invent Mimes, but he first gave them a place in literature, and his literary powers must have been considerable, for Plato is said to have slept with the works of Sophron by his pillow, and to have been influenced by them in the composition of his Dialogues. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that Sophron composed in prose; that Aristotle classed the Dialogues of Plato and the Mimes of Sophron as belonging to the same form of art; and that there are traces in Plato's language of Syracusan idioms and expressions. Beyond this, we have no information about Sophron, and can only endeavour to form some idea of his work from the *Adoniazusæ* of Theocritus, which is a reproduction in hexameter of one of the Mimes. Before the time of Sophron, it would seem that Mimes were not literary works, but

improvisations. The *Adoniazusæ* points to the lower orders as the classes from which Sophron drew his characters. But the precise nature of his Mimes and the mode of their performance are uncertain. "The Mime at first differed from other kinds of comedy—(1) in having no proper plot; (2) in not being represented primarily on the stage; (3) in having but one actor."[1] Perhaps, therefore, we may conjecture, from Aristotle's comparison of Sophron and Plato, that Sophron recited the whole of one of his Mimes, with appropriate change of voice, expression, and gesture for each of the characters, interweaving with their speeches so much of narrative or explanation as was necessary in his own voice and character. For an entertainment of this kind—not uncommon at the present day—a stage would not be absolutely necessary, and this would accord with the indications that Sophron gave his entertainments on the occasion of public festivals, irrespective of the theatre and theatrical performances.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD COMEDY.

Attic Comedy falls into three divisions, the Old, the Middle, and the New. The Old Comedy, whose limits may roughly be considered to be B.C. 460–390, was a public and a political institution. The choregus was appointed by the state; the choregia was a public duty; and the comedian who obtained a choregus from the state thereby and so far obtained the state sanction for his satire. Although the Old Comedy ridiculed every institution and everything out of which a laugh could be raised, it was above all personal. Laws to restrain this personal abuse were made at various times, in B.C. 440 and B.C. 416, and it is probable that in B.C. 412 and B.C. 405, when the democracy was gagged, comedy was gagged also; but it was only when comedy ceased to be a state institution that it ceased to be personal, and it was only when Athens lost her proud consciousness of political independence that comedy ceased to be supported by state authority. From B.C. 390 to B.C. 320, the Middle Comedy, in which the chorus disappears, relied for its humour on its representation of social life and its

[1] Cruttwell's *History of Roman Literature*, p. 239.

caricatures of philosophy and literature. Finally, from B.C. 320 to B.C. 250 we have the New Comedy, which is the comedy of character and manners.

Between the time of Susarion and the period in which comedy became a state institution at Athens, there fall the names of some Attic comedians of whom we practically know nothing. Euetes, whose very existence is doubtful, and Euexenides are mentioned only by Suidas. Myllus figures in a proverb,[1] which has given rise to various attempted explanations, none satisfactory. Chionides wrote a *Persians* in imitation of a play of the same name by Epicharmus. We have now reached a time when Athens, having recovered from the danger and the losses of the Persian wars, was reaping the fruit of her disinterested action in those wars. The powers, of which she had become conscious then, she was now putting forth in all directions, and her political, social, and æsthetic life was showing in all fields of action the quickening it had received in the great struggle with the Persian. It is at this time, about B.C. 460, that we find Magnes flourishing, the first comedian known to us as having won a prize in a dramatic contest. He is said to have won the comic prize eleven times, but to have lost his popularity in his old age. Magnes is an interesting figure in comedy, for in him we have a link between the mimetic dances (which, as we saw in the last chapter, formed one of the sources of comedy) and Aristophanes. One favourite form of dance consisted in the imitation of all sorts of animals, and in this dance we must see the direct ancestor of the *Birds* and the *Frogs* of Magnes; while these again rob Aristophanes of the credit of originality, so far as the idea of making a chorus of birds or other creatures is concerned. Indeed, these comedies of Magnes had many descendants, such as the *Goats* of Eupolis, the *Fishes* of Archippus, the *Snakes* of Menippus, the *Nightingales* of Cantharus, the *Ants* of Plato, &c. These plays are lost, and Aristophanes is left solitary and lofty; whether his height would be to us the same could his former rivals be now seen by his side, is an insoluble problem; but at any rate, in a history of comedy it must not be forgotten that, in the organic development of literature, phenomena which to our fragmentary knowledge appear isolated were never actually solitary, but were always connected in an unbroken line with what preceded them. Passing over Ecphantides, the "cloudy,"[2] we find in Crates another link which might easily have been lost in the chain of development leading up to Aristophanes. The con-

[1] Μύλλος πάντ' ἀκούει. [2] Καννίας.

trast which in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes the Just and the Unjust Reason are made to draw between the actual and the old-fashioned mode of life, seems to have been anticipated in the *Beasts* of Crates. This piece is further interesting as containing a very early plea for vegetarianism. The beasts who formed the chorus urged on man that he should give up meat; and we still have a fragment of the play in which one character expresses comic dismay at the idea of giving up the sausages so dear to heroes of Aristophanic comedy. Crates also produced the earliest preserved specimen of nonsense verses—verses, that is, which are strung together with the intention of producing only the semblance of sense. More serious services, however, than these were rendered to comedy by Crates, according to Aristotle. True to the tradition of its origin, comedy hitherto at Athens seems to have consisted mainly of that personal abuse which was characteristic of the country Phallica. Crates not only abandoned this, but is ranked by Aristotle along with Epicharmus, and is credited with having first produced in Attica comedies with a claim to real dramatic action. His subjects, whether taken from his own imagination or from real life, were transmuted by the poet's power into plays possessing general, natural, and necessary truth, and were no longer bald reproductions of events which did happen, or might at least have happened, but would not strike one as probable in themselves. Not only was the line followed by Crates analogous to that of Epicharmus, but in some instances he directly borrowed from the Sicilian comedian. Thus the character of the drunkard was transferred by Crates from the comedy of Epicharmus to the Athenian stage. His style was elegant and simple, and if, as Aristophanes alleges, his plays were somewhat thin, they were ensured success at Athens by their fertility in ingenious thoughts.

About the same time as Crates lived Cratinus, though whether Cratinus is to be considered as a predecessor or as a successor of Crates is a point on which our evidence scarcely allows us to decide. It may, however, be asserted with some certainty that the services of Cratinus to Attic comedy were of a much more decided and effective character than those of Crates. The boisterous and reckless tendencies of Attic comedy found a faithful exponent in Cratinus. Aristophanes, in the parabasis of the *Knights*, tells us on the best authority—for we still have extant Cratinus' own words for it—that the torrent of Cratinus' words was so impetuous as to bear down everything before it. His audacity of attack was considered by the ancients to exceed

even that of Aristophanes himself. He earned the title of "the people's lash," and he certainly applied the lash all round. Few things or men seem to have escaped him. Pericles he pelted with abusive epithets unsparingly; and he seems to have been never weary of jesting at the peculiarly-shaped head of the Zeus of Athens. That there was some reason for this seems shown by the fact that artists found it uniformly necessary to provide the statues of Pericles with a helmet to relieve the fault of nature. Personalities and politics do not exhaust the subjects of Cratinus' comedies. Philosophy is derided in the *Tarantini* and elsewhere. In his *Thracian Women* he attacks the worship of Bendis, which seems to have been then establishing itself in Athens. In his *Kleobulinæ* he ridicules the fashion, to which Athenian ladies were then devoted, of composing riddles. Innovations in music were met with conservative derision in the *Eunidæ*. The *Nomoi* demonstrated the superiority of the old-fashioned ignorance of reading and writing to the new-fangled education in such unnecessary acquirements, and the *Solon* exalted the good old times as compared with modern degeneracy. In all these sallies, the humour must have had a great deal that was good-natured; for so impartial is Cratinus in the objects of his comedies, that he does not even exempt himself. His affection for wine pointed the jokes of many contemporary comedians.[1] Cratinus went farther, and made his own failing the subject of a comedy, the *Flask*. When Aristophanes in the *Knights* treated him as a played-out old man, Cratinus waited for the year to come round, and then at the next contest of comedians defeated a piece of Aristophanes' with the *Flask*. In this comedy Cratinus represents himself as wedded to *Comœdia*, but unfortunately yielding to the charms of *Methe*. Consequently his lawful wife proceeds to institute an action for divorce and cruelty.[2] Mutual friends do their best to dissuade *Comœdia* from this course, but she persists. Eventually Cratinus abandons his mistress, and devotes himself entirely to Comedy.

In addition to these plays, which are in the true spirit of the Old Comedy, Cratinus wrote, probably during the action of one of the gagging laws,[3] mythological travesties after the fashion of Epicharmus. In the face of the statement of Aristotle that it was unknown who determined the number of actors in comedy, it will not do to accept the assertion that Cratinus

[1] To one of these must be attributed the statement – generally accepted seriously – that Cratinus belonged τῇ Οἰνηΐδος φυλῇ.

[2] Κλεψύδρα. [3] Μὴ κωμῳδεῖν ὀνόμασι.

rendered this service. In Cratinus we may see the Æschylus of comedy; but it is in the force of the impression which the personality of Cratinus made on comedy that we must seek to justify the comparison. Both poets possessed the audacity of genius, and in each case the boldness of the man revealed itself in both conception and expression. About the justice of the criticism that Cratinus was happier in the conception than in the carrying out of his plots, the fragments that are left do not enable us to judge. The purity and "Atticity" of his style, however, are shown by his fragments, and by the fact that Aristophanes did not disdain to borrow verses occasionally from him.

Although the Old Comedy is, on the whole, characterised by the fact that it based itself on the amusement which was to be made out of contemporary events, still there was always present a tendency to mythological travesties, which did not depend for their success on local or political allusions. Sometimes this latter tendency received external aid, as when personalities were forbidden by law; but at other times the genius of a comedian of itself turned him rather to the parody of myths than to the ridicule of the present. Of such a comedian we have an instance in Pherecrates. A contemporary and rival of Cratinus and Crates, he is said to have started life as one of Crates' actors. If this be true, it is easy to understand that Pherecrates followed in the steps of Crates, who himself, as we have seen, followed at Athens the line of direction originally traced by Epicharmus at Syracuse. Gluttony, which afforded so much material for Epicharmus, was utilised as subject-matter by Pherecrates in his *Good Men*. Fixed types of character, such as the parasite in the *Thalatta*, or the hetaira in the *Corianno* or the *Petala*, or pictures from low life, such as occurred in his *Pannychis*, at once show that his literary ancestor is Epicharmus, and demonstrate that the Middle and New Comedy were no sudden, or even new departure, but simply the persistence of a type of comedy which had always existed, and which, in the struggle for existence, only needed the extinction of its formidable competitor in order to reach its full development. It must not, however, be imagined that Pherecrates cultivated nothing but the Epicharmian tendency in comedy. As Cratinus at times turned to the travesty of myths, so Pherecrates occasionally made attacks, as on Alcibiades, of a political nature, or, as on Melanthius, of a literary kind. Nor is it merely as a predecessor of the New Comedy that he must be regarded, for Aristophanes owes something to him. Pherecrates was credited in

antiquity with much originality and power of invention, and although it is little more than conjecture that the *Tyrannis* had for its subject the rule of woman, and, therefore, so far anticipated Aristophanes, it is certain that the idea of laying the scene of a comedy in the nether world, as in the *Frogs*, did not originate with Aristophanes, but must be placed to the credit of Pherecrates. It is interesting to note that in this play—the *Crapatali*—Æschylus is brought on the stage, and is drawn with the same touches as is the character in the *Frogs*. Indeed, from the fragment of a speech of Æschylus,[1] it would appear that in the *Crapatali*, as well as in the *Frogs*, the merits of Æschylus as a poet were in question.

Teleclides seems to have been a political partisan, who supported Nicias, and was joined by another comedian, Hermippus, in virulent attacks on Pericles. Hermippus availed himself particularly of the feeling in Athens at the time of the first Peloponnesian invasion to abuse Pericles for not risking an engagement with the enemy. Pericles, however, has been treated with more kindness by fortune than Cleon, for the attacks upon Pericles have perished, whereas those of Aristophanes on Cleon remain. Pericles was not the only victim of Hermippus; Hyperbolus and Hyperbolus' mother were also favourite subjects for abuse, which, perhaps, had as little truth in it as Aristophanes' slanders with regard to Euripides' mother. In Hermippus, again, we find the two tendencies of the Old Comedy struggling with each other. He was not entirely devoted to political comedy, but, in his *Birth of Athene*, he set the example of a species of mythological travesty which found frequent imitators among the poets of the Middle Comedy. About Myrtilus, the brother of Hermippus, and about Alcimenes we know nothing. Philonides was the friend and senior of Aristophanes, whose *Banqueters* Philonides brought out, possibly because Aristophanes was not of the age required by law in a comic poet.[2] Philonides also brought out the *Frogs* on behalf of Aristophanes. With regard to the writings of Philonides himself we can say little. His *Cothurni* or *Turncoats* may have been written about the time when Theramenes earned the epithet of Cothurnus, though it is going beyond our evidence to imagine any causal connection between the two events.

In antiquity, Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes were regarded as forming a triad among comedians comparable to Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides among tragedians. The

[1] Ὅστις γ' αὐτοῖς παρέδωκα τέχνην μεγάλην ἐξοικοδομήσας.
[2] But see below, chap. vii.

first comedy of Eupolis was produced upon the stage in B.C. 429, and it is said that he was at the time a mere boy of seventeen. The date and manner of his death, which have been the subject of various absurd and impossible stories, cannot be decided; all that can be said is that he was not dead in B.C. 412. His relations with Aristophanes were originally of an intimate kind, but eventually such as led to recrimination, and our knowledge with regard to them is derived mainly from the mutual abuse of the two comedians. That lines 1288–1312 of the *Knights* of Aristophanes are the work of Eupolis was the universal opinion of antiquity, and seems to be based on unimpeachable tradition. Whether, however, this was a case of literary piracy is another question. Cratinus in his *Flask* had no hesitation in accusing Aristophanes of literary theft. It is, however, safer to take Eupolis' own statement in the *Baptæ*,[1] from which it would seem that Eupolis collaborated with Aristophanes in the production of the *Knights*. The attempts to trace Eupolis' hand or suggestions elsewhere in the play are not satisfactory, and perhaps we may be content to believe that Eupolis' claim was excessive, and that Aristophanes' acknowledgment of his real debt was insufficient. In this episode in the lives of Eupolis and Aristophanes we may, perhaps, see traces of the existence of a literary clique formed by these two poets and other young comedians for the purpose of driving the older authors from the comic stage. Political clubs were frequent in Athens, and a literary "hetæria" is not impossible to conceive, although the evidence for its existence is, it must be confessed, not particularly strong. Turning to the merits of Eupolis as a comedian, we find that, although he was as violent in his expressions of attack and abuse as was his great predecessor Cratinus, he yet managed to carry it off with a grace peculiarly his own. His flights of imagination were lofty and daring, and his genius was at once artistic and inventive. The vein of personal abuse was strong in him: Cleon and Alcibiades, politicians, profligates, and philosophers, were visited with impartiality. Socrates was the object of a personal bitterness such as can scarcely be discovered in Aristophanes, and Socrates' chief offence, according to Eupolis, was his poverty. It is perhaps in consequence of, certainly in accordance with, this Archilochian vein that Eupolis produced no mythological travesties. With the exception of his *Capræ*, which, as far as we know, was not of a distinctively political tendency, all his comedies

[1] Κλαίουσι τοὺς Ἱππέας συνεπαίροντα τῷ φελλεῖ τροῖνα πάλιμπρωδίμων.

were probably concerned with events of the day. In his fragments, as in the fragments of a shattered mirror, we may see reflected imperfectly the history of his time, and that is largely the history of the Peloponnesian war. As in Euripides and Sophocles, the Spartans, when introduced in a tragedy, are made to play invidious parts, so in the *Helots* of Eupolis we may be sure that that institution, the most dangerous to Sparta of all Spartan institutions, was not represented under its most favourable light. In the *Taxiarchi*, Athens' naval hero, Phormio, was introduced upon the stage. At the time of this comedy, Athens was fighting with a light heart, and the hardships of war were presented on their comic side, in the ludicrous complaints of the effeminate Dionysus, who found in the *Taxiarchi* military service as unpleasant as in the *Frogs* he finds rowing. Later in the war, service was more of a duty than a jest, and in the *Malingerer* we have Eupolis directing his talents to scorn of the young men who had not the stuff of soldiers in them. Perhaps in no respect does Eupolis show more clearly his claims to be considered a comedian of the Old Attic Comedy than in his relations to the politicians of his time. His literary activity begins after the death of Pericles, but not after the death of Cleon or Hyperbolus, and hence the difference in his attitude towards these statesmen respectively. Pericles, whom Cratinus, Teleclides, Hermippus, and doubtless all real comedians, derided unceasingly, had now been elevated on the pedestal of the "good old times," and it is from comedy that Pericles obtains his best known eulogy. Cleon and Hyperbolus, however, were guilty of the unpardonable fault of being yet alive, and this fault is visited with condign punishment in the *Maricâs* and the *Golden Age*. "Maricâs" is a foreign word, and is used as an insulting epithet for Hyperbolus; the *Golden Age* was directed at the Athenians' infatuation for Cleon. So successful had he been, that, according to Eupolis, the Athenians quite relied upon his restoring the age of gold. With a boldness which is creditable to his courage, and, according to the fable, cost him his life, Eupolis did not spare Alcibiades from attack. The argument, however, of the *Baptæ*, in which the attack was delivered, is lost, apparently beyond recovery, and it can only be conjectured that it was rather on the ground of public morality than of politics that Alcibiades was held up to derision. It seems also that here, too, as in the case of the worship of Bendis, comedy undertook the duty of protecting the country from the invasion of new religions; for the *Baptæ* was directed against the worship of Cotytto as much as against

Alcibiades himself. (Politics, philosophy, religion, and, lastly, law, came under the comprehensive sweep of Eupolis.) The litigiousness of the Athenians, which afforded material for the *Wasps* of Aristophanes, gave a subject for the *Prospaltii* (inhabitants of the deme of Prospaltos, apparently much given to lawsuits) of Eupolis.

Inadequate as is the above account of this comedian's works and scope, it may serve to show that Eupolis was one of the greatest exponents of the Old Comedy. A true Athenian, he knew the life of Athens on every side. Everything that could interest an Athenian citizen he laid under contribution to provide material for his comedies. The comic possibilities of anything and any person he at once seized on. He managed his style and its huge compounded words with as much ease and grace as he controlled his wild plots. His personifications, *e.g.* of the triremes of the Athenian navy or of the allied cities of the Athenian confederacy, may be ranked for daring and success with those of Aristophanes, for whom, we may say, to characterise him, he was no unworthy collaborator.

Phrynichus, to be distinguished from the general and from the tragedian of the same name, though not ranked in the first class of comedians by the Alexandrine critics, was considered by them as a writer of importance in the history of the Old Comedy. Commencing his literary career at the same time as Eupolis, and dying before Aristophanes, Phrynichus seems to have at one time belonged to the same literary set as those two poets. For Aristophanes, when retorting on Eupolis the charge of piracy, adds the further charge that Eupolis stole from Phrynichus as well as from the *Knights*. As a political combatant, Phrynichus does not appear to have made any great mark on the history of the Old Comedy. At the same time, his comedy *Monotropus*, which, from its title, might have been a character-comedy, does not really justify us in ranking him as one of the ancestors of the New Comedy. Although the writers of the New Comedy produced more than one piece bearing this title, and although such plays were undoubtedly general studies of this type of character, we are excluded from comparing with them the comedy of Phrynichus, because the author expressly declares by the mouth of one of the characters that the character was a caricature of a contemporary Athenian, the celebrated misanthrope Timon. Perhaps the work of Phrynichus that would have had most interest for us, if it had been preserved, is the *Muses*, from which comes a celebrated tribute

to Sophocles.[1] From it, and from the title of the comedy, it has been conjectured that in this play, as in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, there was a criticism of the dramatic merits of Sophocles and Euripides. The *Muses* was put on the stage at the same time as the *Frogs*, and was defeated by it. We have already seen that this kind of literary criticism occurs in Old Comedy at least as early as the time of the *Crapatali* of Pherecrates.

Plato, the comedian, was a contemporary of Aristophanes. His fierce invective and brilliancy of expression class him with Cratinus. To his long life and varied experience correspond the large number and great variety of his comedies. Politicians, orators, and tragedians were attacked and exposed in such plays as his *Hyperbolus*, *Cleophon*, and *Cinesias*. His fellow-comedians did not escape, and in his *Victories* he made merry over the colossal figure of Peace which Aristophanes introduces in his comedy of that name. He wrote also various mythological and some domestic comedies, which may reasonably be supposed to have been composed rather from fear of the law than from any preference to this style of play on the part of the author himself.

Of some twenty-five other comedians who were classed by Alexandrine critics among the writers of the Old Comedy, practically nothing is known. Ameipsias twice defeated Aristophanes. Archippus put a chorus of fishes on the stage, and the plot of his *Fishes* seems to have consisted in a war between the fishes and the fish-eating Athenians, which was eventually concluded by a more or less comic treaty. From one fragment[2] it would seem that sea-sickness was sufficiently appreciated in the time of Archippus to furnish forth a joke. Callias, perhaps, lets us into the secret why the followers of Socrates and the students of philosophy were not always loved in Athens, when he touches on the conceit of young philosophers.[3] And from Lysippus we have a fragment[4] which not only shows the

[1] μάκαρ Σοφοκλέης, ὃς πολὺν χρόνον βιοὺς
ἀπέθανεν, εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ καὶ δεξιός,
πολλὰς ποιήσας καὶ καλὰς τραγῳδίας·
καλῶς δ' ἐτελεύτησ', οὐδὲν ὑπομείνας κακόν.

[2] ὡς ἡδὺ τὴν θάλατταν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ὁρᾶν,
ὦ μῆτερ, ἐστι μὴ πλέοντα μηδαμοῦ.

[3] A. τί δὴ σὺ σεμνοῖ καὶ φρονεῖς οὕτω μέγα;
B. ἔξεστι γάρ μοι. Σωκράτης γὰρ αἴτιος.

[4] εἰ μὴ τεθέασαι τὰς Ἀθήνας, στέλεχος εἶ,
εἰ δὲ τεθέασαι μὴ τεθήρευσαι δ', ὄνος
εἰ δ' εὐαρεστῶν ἀπεστρέχεις καυθήλιος.

Athenians' pride in Athens, but further informs us that the donkey was there regarded as a stupid animal. The names of the remaining comedians are but names to us—Aristonymus, Aristomenes, Hegemon, Lycis, Leuco, Metagenes, who was the son of a slave, and wrote comedies intended to be read, not acted; Strattis, whose jokes were weak, and who parodied plays of Euripides; Alcæus, Eunicus, Cantharus, Diocles, one of whose fragments shows that he was a writer of some elegance and reflection; Nicochares, Nicophron, Philyllius, Polyzelus, Sannyrio, Demetrius, Apollophanes, Cephisodorus, Epilycus, and Euthycles. As to these writers, who, as was said above, were placed among the writers of the Old Comedy by the Alexandrine critics, we can say nothing more than that, to judge from the names of their plays, they must have inclined much more to the Middle than to the Old Comedy.

CHAPTER VII.

ARISTOPHANES.

ARISTOPHANES, son of Philippus, of the deme of Cydathenaion, was born about B.C. 444, and died about B.C. 380. What little we know about his life is mainly derived from the scanty and usually ambiguous hints to be found in his own plays. The fact that he could be charged with being an alien, and, perhaps, the complaint of Eupolis that the Athenians showed more favour to foreign than to native comedians, show that there was something which at least had the appearance of irregularity in Aristophanes' extraction.[1]

For us, the life of Aristophanes is his works. These may be divided into two groups—that which precedes and that which follows the Sicilian expedition. In both groups there are comedies primarily political, but those of the earlier group are distinguished by greater freedom of attack and more unrestrained personalities than those of the second. In both there are comedies dealing with philosophy or literature, but the earlier ones treat those subjects in their relation to and effect

[1] Attempts have been made to combine this with *Ach.* 653, and to infer that Aristophanes or his father obtained a κληρουχία in Ægina; but it is uncertain whether the parabasis of the *Acharnians* refers to Aristophanes himself or to Callistratus, in whose name the piece was brought out, and consequently little reliance can be placed on the combination.

on the life of the nation, while the later ones treat them apart from any such relation. The attitude Aristophanes assumed towards the new tendencies of his time was at first that of uncompromising hostility, subsequently that of qualified opposition, and later still that of his early years. But of this change of attitude Aristophanes himself was hardly conscious, and it does not correspond to the division into two groups which we have laid down. It is, however, only in the later group that we find such plays as the *Plutus* or *Aeolosicon*, which are of a purely mythological cast, and belong to the Middle rather than to the Old Comedy.

Before composing comedies of his own, Aristophanes seems to have done something in the way of comic writing, assisting his friends.[1] When he took to composing independently, he brought out his first three plays not in his own name, but under that of Callistratus, and perhaps Philonides. The reason for this has been supposed, on the authority of a scholiast, to have been that the law forbade any poet of less than forty years of age to receive a chorus from the Archon. As, however, in all probability, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Eupolis produced plays in their own names before attaining that age, and as Aristophanes himself was not even thirty years old when he personally brought out the *Knights*, it seems probable that the law in question owes its existence to confusion with a law, which certainly did exist though disregarded, that no person under that age should be choregus to the chorus of boys. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that the Archon would decline to give a mere boy of eighteen or twenty years of age a chorus. If to this we add that, as Aristophanes himself gives us to understand in the parabasis of the *Knights*,[2] the training of the chorus and the production of a comedy required much practical experience, which Aristophanes at that age did not possess, we have a sufficient explanation of his course of procedure.

The *Dætaleis* or *Banqueters*, B.C. 427, was the first comedy produced by Aristophanes,[3] and it obtained the second prize. Like the *Clouds*, this piece dealt with education, and represented the older methods as exclusively productive of morality, and the new tendency as making for the dishonest quibbles of superficial rhetoric. In the following year Callistratus brought

[1] Vesp. 1018:—

οὐ φανερῶς, ἀλλ' ἐπικουρῶν κρύβδην ἑτέροισι ποιηταῖς.

[2] 516, 541.

[3] *Nub.* 5254; whether in the name of Philonides or Callistratus is uncertain.

out the *Babylonians* on behalf of Aristophanes. The date we know from the parabasis of the *Acharnians*,[1] which shows that the *Babylonians* contained some allusions to the embassy of Gorgias, who had been sent by the Leontini the previous year to obtain the assistance of Athens against Syracuse. The title of the play seems to have been a word used at Athens in a general sense for foreign slaves, and the chorus consisted accordingly of slaves branded on the forehead with the mark of the owl, indicating that they were the property of Athens—a view of things which could hardly have been felt as complimentary by the allied states, whom this chorus of branded slaves was intended to represent. As, moreover, this comedy was performed in the spring, when large numbers of the allies were present in Athens[2] for the purpose of paying their tribute, the audacity of thus representing the oppression and extortion to which these very allies were, according to Aristophanes, subjected, amounted to recklessness. The consequence was a prosecution instituted by Cleon,[3] probably against Callistratus, who would be legally responsible for the play, though everybody would know that Aristophanes was the person really implicated.

In B.C. 425, the next year, Callistratus produced another comedy for Aristophanes, the *Acharnians*. This, the earliest of the eleven plays which have survived to our times, obtained the first prize. It may be regarded as a type of Aristophanic comedy. Its object is simple: to set before the Athenians the desirability of peace. Its machinery is equally simple and direct. Dicæopolis concludes a private peace with the Lacedæmonians, and then there follows a series of scenes in which the charms of peace are presented, not by description, to the minds of the spectators, but sensuously and concretely to the eyes of all beholders. This trick of materialising an idea, of dramatising a simile, is at the base of Aristophanic comedy. Aristophanes does not call the allied states "slaves" of Athens; he brings them on the stage dressed and branded as "Babylonians." Instead of comparing the dikasts of Athens to a swarm of pestering insects, he produces them arrayed in the similitude of "wasps." Not satisfied with the mere word "air-walking,"[4] to describe the pursuits of Socrates, he discloses him suspended in a hanging basket. Such simplicity of treatment obviously can only be attained at the expense of probability, and often of possibility. At the festival of the wine-god ordinary

[1] 635. [2] *Ach.* 502. [3] *Ach.* 377.
[4] ἀεροβατεῖν.

rules and conventions were conventionally and as a rule supposed not to hold, and the comedian's freedom of treatment was shown by, and allowed in, not only his mode of dealing with real events and persons, but also in his disregard for the limits of time and space. Thus, in the *Acharnians*, the scene, originally laid in Athens, shifts without warning or apology to the country. The seasons are equally accommodating, and spring succeeds to autumn at command. The moment Dicæopolis concludes his peace with the Peloponnesians, the Bœotians and Megarians, who have evidently been waiting behind the scenes so as to appear without a second's delay, appear as if by magic to trade with him. Not only are the external and mechanical categories of space and time treated thus cavalierly,[1] but the bonds of internal probability of connection between one scene or character and another are equally despised. Of the twenty characters or more that belong to the play, most appear upon the scene for no other reason than that the author needs them, and, having raised a laugh, depart, passing over the stage with as little connection between each other as have the people who pass one in a busy street or the victims who defile by the clown in a harlequinade. But the incidents in a comedy of Aristophanes, though linked by no internal chain of causation or probability, all subserve the main purpose of the play—in the case of the *Acharnians* that of proving the attractions of peace; and more than this is not expected from the primitive stage in which the Old Comedy was. Moreover, each of the incidents is comic in its own way. The variety thus gained precludes any danger of monotony, and the absence of motive in the incidents is concealed by the rapidity and force with which Aristophanes' tide of humour carries his comedy along.

In the next year, B.C. 424, Aristophanes appeared before the public of Athens for the first time in his own name with the *Knights*. In this comedy Aristophanes concentrates himself again on one simple object, that of attacking Cleon. Whether

[1] It must, however, always be remembered that as the *Clouds* and the *Wasps* which have come down to us are probably not the *Clouds* and the *Wasps* which were performed on the Athenian stage, but amalgamations or "contaminations" of, in each case, two distinct comedies at least, so too possibly the changes of place and time in the *Acharnians* are due to a "contamination." But, on the other hand, the changes—at any rate of place—in the *Frogs* are quite parallel to those of the *Acharnians*, and are above suspicion. Generally, too, we may say that these changes of place and time are characteristic of the early stage of drama (*cf.* the *Agamemnon*), and may be readily distinguished from inconsistencies such as, in the *Clouds*, making the play turn first upon the stupidity and then on the cleverness of Strepsiades.

Cleon had been subjected to similar attentions on the part of Aristophanes in the *Babylonians*, we cannot say. It is, therefore, hard to decide whether the prosecution which Cleon then instituted was due to personal motives, or was really prompted by desire for the public good. It is, however, impossible to deny that from the time of that prosecution the matter became one of personal enmity between Aristophanes and Cleon. For a year Aristophanes allowed the matter to rest, possibly not caring to involve Callistratus in any further lawsuits; when, however, he came before the world in his own name he made such an onslaught, in the *Knights*, on Cleon as must have been unusual even at the festival of Dionysus. Cleon's reply was a vexatious charge made at law, that Aristophanes was not a true-born Athenian citizen.[1] The story goes, that Aristophanes replied to the charge—which must then have been that not Philippus, but a foreigner was his father—by an apt citation from Homer.[2] If it is true that this procured his acquittal, it shows that apposite quotations were valuable as evidence in an Athenian law court. How much further Cleon carried his reprisals, and whether a passage in the *Wasps*[3] is to be taken literally to mean that Cleon thrashed Aristophanes, or caused him to be thrashed, is uncertain. Only one thing is clear, and that is, that Aristophanes learned prudence, and for the rest of his life did not allow his muse or his feelings to carry him into danger again.

The knights who are represented by the chorus of Aristophanes' comedy, are not to be confused with the division of citizens made by Solon into Pentacosiomedimni, Knights, Zeugitæ, and Thetes. In the time of Aristophanes the knights were chosen[4] from each tribe by the two hipparchs; and as their service was not limited to the dangers of war, but brought much distinction in peace, volunteers were always forthcoming. In many festivals, and particularly in the Panathenæa, the knights rode in the processions in full array. At all times the cavalry has been the branch of the service which the wealthy classes have affected, and Athens was no exception to the rule. Between this class and the lamp-sellers and tanners, who aspired to rule the state, there were, in addition to the difference of politics which separated them, distinctions of social position to embitter still further their strife. It was then extremely natu-

[1] *ξενίας γραφή.*

[2] *μήτηρ μέν τ' ἐμέ φησι τοῦ ἔμμεναι· αὐτὰρ ἐγωγε*
οὐκ οἶδ', οὐ γὰρ πώ τις ἑὸν γόνον αὐτὸς ἀνέγνω.

[3] 1285.

[4] Subject to a *δοκιμασία* by the *βουλή*.

ral that Aristophanes, when about to attack Cleon, should introduce a chorus of knights. That the choreutæ actually were knights in this case, is probably a misinterpretation of a passage in the comedy,[1] just as the tale that no one but Aristophanes himself dared act the part of Cleon, and that he had to do so without a mask, is a misunderstanding of another passage[2] in the play.

Treating the *Knights* now from the literary rather than the political point of view, we notice that the tendency to personification, and to the concrete rather than the abstract, finds its expression in bringing on the stage a character who is the people itself, Demos. This means of showing the relation between Cleon and the people is comic in itself, and much that is humorous is got out of it; but, as compared with the *Acharnians*, the *Knights* cannot be pronounced rich or varied in incidents. The business repeats itself considerably, and it is testimony to the comic genius of Aristophanes that, in spite of this, the monotony which threatens is scarcely felt. The piece is declamatory rather than dramatic, and the declamation of abuse, even though every imaginable species of turpitude is alleged against Cleon, does not lend itself to dramatic treatment. Whether this is really the explanation of the want of invention in the *Knights*, and whether this was the literary penalty which Aristophanes had to pay for the choice of his subject, or whether the want of invention in this case is due to the irregular action of genius, the fact remains. Aristophanes, however, has more strings than one to his bow. His command extends over the whole range of the comic, and if in the *Knights* there is less variety than in the *Acharnians*, all the other resources of humour are freely used. The contest of oracles, for instance, in which the Paphlagonian and the Sausage-seller engage, is fertile in the most ingenious and amusing parodies on the mystic style of oracular expression. The enormously long speeches which a Messenger inevitably makes in a Greek tragedy are delightfully parodied by the Sausage-seller. Nor must the sarcasm be overlooked with which it is represented that the only man who can possibly contend with this leather-seller is a sausage-seller, that Athens' sole hope of political salvation rests on the slender chance of finding a bigger blackguard than Cleon.

In connection with the political comedies of Aristophanes, we are often told that Aristophanes was certainly a poet, but first of all a patriot, that behind the grinning mask of comedy is the serious face of a great political teacher. In estimating

[1] 505. [2] 230.

the literary value of Aristophanes' work such considerations are wholly out of place. Literature must be judged by its own canons, and to introduce personal considerations is as relevant as it would be to claim beauty for a line of verse because it expressed a scientific truth in the terms and with the precision of science. Patriotism has its beauty, and poetry has its beauty but the beauty of the one thing is quite distinct from the beauty of the other; and to prove that Aristophanes has the beauty of patriotism will not in the slightest degree prove that he possesses that of poetry, nor will it at all help us to feel the beauty of his poetry. Each kind of art has its appropriate function to fulfil, its peculiar pleasure to excite, and no amount of demonstration that a given specimen of art or literature performs some function or excites some pleasure other than that proper to it, will make that piece of art or of literature good of its kind. That in the case of comedy, of all forms of literature, a mistake on this point should be possible is strange. The object of comedy is plainly to amuse, and a comedy which should *not* amuse could not be a good comedy, though it sent you away with the most patriotic aspirations or the most virtuous resolves. Further, it may be questioned whether Aristophanes himself would have claimed that his vocation was that of patriot rather than poet. It is true that, in the *Frogs*,[1] he speaks as though the function of tragedy were to make men brave and good, and it may perhaps be inferred that he held some similar but erroneous theory as to the function of comedy. But Aristophanes would not be the only man whose practice was better than his theory. The passages[2] which have been quoted to show that he regarded himself as having rendered great services to, and as having shown great courage on behalf of, the state, need only be examined to show their real nature. When, for instance, in the *Acharnians*, Aristophanes says that the Great King prophesied that the Athenians were sure to defeat the Spartans, because they had Aristophanes to guide them, and that the Spartans claimed Ægina solely because they thereby hoped to deprive Athens of their patriot comedian, it requires but little humour to appreciate the joke, and to see that Aristophanes' ridicule spared nothing, not even himself. To imagine that such a passage betrays the proud consciousness of a man who feels a high calling to a solemn duty is simply a ponderous misapprehension.

If it were true that the Old Comedy had had no political

[1] 1022 and 1055.

[2] E.g. *Vesp.* 1088, 1043, *Ach.* 645, *Eq.* 511, *Pax* 700, *Nub.* 549.

direction imparted to it until the time of Aristophanes, if it were true, as the passages in the *Clouds* and the *Peace* seem to imply, that Aristophanes was the first comedian to attack public men or, at least, the prominent statesmen of the day, then there would be some reasonable ground for believing that Aristophanes was a comedian because he was a politician. But comedy was political long before Aristophanes wrote comedies, and, from Pericles downwards, the greatest men of Athens were attacked by the comedians of their day. If proof were needed that Aristophanes was a politician because he was a comedian, and did not become a comedian because he was a politician, it would be afforded by the mere fact that when comedy ceased to be political Aristophanes still continued to write comedies. That Aristophanes wrote poetry because he was a poet, and not because he was a patriot, is proved by the lyrical passages, whose pure and intrinsic beauty places him by the side of Shakspere. That he was urged to comedy by the instinct of the comedian and not by the aims of the politician, would be shown by the early age at which the instinct manifested itself, if it were not sufficiently demonstrated by the irresistible flood of comic power which carries off the loosely and inartistically connected scenes of his comedies. Finally, when in the *Knights* Aristophanes talks of his victory over Cleon, his own words show that the triumph in which he gloried did not consist in the political annihilation of Cleon, for Cleon flourished more than ever, in the Comic prize awarded to his play.

It is only those who do not understand that poetry and humour can have merits of their own, and must be judged by standards of their own, who will think that the fame of Aristophanes is impaired by recognising that earnestness was not always or primarily the object of Aristophanes' jests. For although the question of Aristophanes' patriotism and of his politics has nothing to do with his literary rank, in considering his character as a man they have to be taken into account. In the small city-states of Greece, and owing to the very fact of their smallness, the demands of the state upon the citizen were much more considerable than in the nation-states of modern days. To the mind of Aristotle, indeed, it had occurred that there were other duties than those of citizenship, and that it was possible to be a good man and yet not a good citizen. But before his time it may be questioned whether it was not a universal assumption that he who performed duly all the functions of a citizen, thereby discharged the whole duty of man. For the average citizen who had no ideas but those of

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from the current stock in use amongst his neighbours, and whose feelings, sympathies, objects, and interests were those of his fellow-citizens, such a state of things was adapted. But for the man whose intellectual growth raised him to a height that enabled him to see beyond the limits of the city, and gave him interests beyond its local and transient interests, such a state of things was not adapted. A want of harmony between him and his fellows would necessarily be felt by both, and as Greek science knew nothing of evolution, and Greek philosophers had no conception of progress, as Greek poets could not look forward, and as Greek statesmen had no notion that perfection was in the future and not in the past, it necessarily resulted that those minds, whose greatness put them out of joint with the present, looking for a better state of things, saw it in the past. They looked before, not after, and pined for what was not. Plato, Thucydides, Isocrates, and Aristophanes, were all aristocrats. Euripides, in whom, indeed, were concentrated all the new tendencies of his time, had no faith in the future, and was as much estranged from the mass of the citizens as the most reactionary of oligarchs. In his general political views then, and especially in his longing for peace, Aristophanes was undoubtedly sincere. In some cases, as in that of Cleon, it is idle to deny that personal feeling had more to do with his views than had any other emotion, and in no case is it reasonable to imagine that the particular charges or epithets have necessarily or probably any ground other than the humour attaching to abuse. In his aristocratical sympathies and his opposition to the war, however, we may, as we have said, recognise Aristophanes' sincerity, and, whether such views were or were not admirable in themselves, he is at least entitled to all the merit that is due to a man who fights an up-hill battle, and who holds to the struggle his life through. Throughout his life, Aristophanes was opposed in politics to the majority of the citizens before whom his comedies were presented, and this raises the question as to the political influence of Aristophanes' comedies.

In the first place, it is hard to imagine that a comedian would have ventured to attack so unsparingly the views of the majority of his audience, if the attack were to be taken seriously. In this respect we may consider religion and politics together, and if the ridicule poured upon Dionysus in the *Frogs* was taken by the audience in jest, and was not regarded by them as any serious argument against the worship of the god, then we may conclude that the audience regarded in the same light the ridi-

cule poured upon the politician they believed in. It was excellent fooling, but did not prevent the Athenians from bestowing offerings on Dionysus, or office on Cleon. It may, however, be said that the ridicule of the gods, though not intended by Aristophanes so to operate, yet did act as a solvent on the national religion. This is true, but it does not follow that Aristophanes' ridicule had a similar effect on the democratical party. It is much more probable that in this case, too, the solvent operated in a manner unexpected by Aristophanes, and that it destroyed, not the faith of the democrats in democracy, but the faith of the Athenians in the honour of their public men.

In the next place, if we look at history and endeavour to trace the effect of comedy on politics, we see that whatever its effect may have been, it was too minute to be visible at this distance of time. Pericles, as we have already seen, if abuse could have effected it, would have governed Athens but a brief time. The effect of the *Babylonians* on the political fortunes of Cleon is to be inferred from the fact, that it was only after that play that Cleon reached the height of his power. Again, the Athenians hear and crown the *Knights*, and immediately despatch Cleon to Thrace with full powers of command. Of all the lesser leaders of the people, Eucrates, Lysicles, Hyperbolus, &c., not one, so far as we know, was prevented by the attacks of the comedians from attaining and exercising influence over the people. Aristophanes had nearly twenty-seven years in which to persuade the people to make peace, but his efforts were not crowned with success.

To these considerations we may add what we have said above, that even in the parabases Aristophanes does not take himself too seriously. He puts forward his claims to have done sober service to the state with such comic exaggeration, that it would be quite open to his hearers to believe either that he did or did not mean his words seriously; and, as the majority of his audience would not have relished his words if they thought them serious, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the majority enjoyed them as a joke merely. Lastly, to dismiss the question of the political influence of comedy, it must be acknowledged that for a poet to select comedy as the means for doing service to the state, would be a somewhat stupid choice. The very nature of comedy is its negative character. As a weapon of destruction it may be effective, but as a tool for construction it must be a failure. To understand this, we have only to ask how many practical suggestions the political comedies of Aristophanes contain for bringing about the state of things which

the author desired to see, and the very question is ridiculous. In such comedies as those of Aristophanes, where every situation, character, idea, and allusion, depends for success on its absurdity, we can expect, as we get, no more practical suggestion for concluding the Peloponnesian War than that an ambassador should hire a beetle to convey him aloft to interview Zeus on the subject. In respect of only one thing does it seem necessary to modify this view of the essentially negative character of comedy. The lyrical passages of comedy did give Aristophanes an opportunity of dwelling with true poetic power on the charms of peace, and of this opportunity he does not fail to avail himself.[1] But in all other respects, comedy is politically sterile.

The comedies of Aristophanes, however, are by no means all or exclusively political, as the *Clouds*, produced the year (B.C. 423) after the *Knights*, may serve to remind us. Every person or thing which for any reason occupied the public attention, was thereby potentially, and as a rule actually, a subject for the Old Comedy of Athens. The object of the *Clouds* was to ridicule Socrates and the new tendencies in philosophy and rhetoric. That Socrates, who morally is recognised as the greatest man outside of Christianity, and who gave to philosophy the direction which it has followed to our own days, should have been chosen by Aristophanes for ridicule, has been regarded as a fact requiring much explanation. Indeed, so long as we persist in regarding Aristophanes not as a poet and the greatest of comedians, but as a mighty thinker whose penetrating glance pierced to the philosophical foundations of things, whose absorbing purpose was, not to make the Athenians laugh, but at all costs to rescue his fellow-citizens from political and moral perdition, so long the *Clouds* will remain an insoluble problem. It is not, however, necessary to proceed on any such assumption; on the contrary, as there is not the least shred of evidence that Aristophanes did know anything about philosophy, and as the *Clouds*—our only positive evidence—goes to prove that he did *not* possess any philosophical knowledge, it is perhaps advisable to renounce the assumption. We may proceed from a fact, the fact that Aristophanes was a comedian. A comedian is distinguished from his fellow-men, not by superior philosophical or political capacities, but by his seeing the comic side of things, and by the fact that his function and his satisfaction as an artist consist in giving appropriate expression to that perception. Philosophers in general, and a philosopher in

[1] *Pax*. 566–581.

particular possessing the personal appearance of Socrates, offer a fair field for the exercise of the comic faculty, and this itself will account for Aristophanes writing the *Clouds;* we are not compelled to assume that the comedy could only be prompted by the fervour of moral passion or philosophical conviction. Certainly Plato, and therefore, probably, Socrates, did not regard the *Clouds* in any such serious light.

But although a consuming zeal for his country's good was not the sole or a dominant motive in Aristophanes' mind, it is quite probable that his sober opinions on philosophy coincided with his instincts as a comedian, nor is it any objection to this view that he knew nothing about philosophy. A man may be earnest in his opposition to what he does not understand. On the other hand, the fact that Aristophanes ridicules philosophy would not by itself prove that he did not believe in philosophy. Such a line of argument would prove that he did not believe in the religion of his fathers, in himself, or in anything. There can, however, be no doubt that in respect of philosophy, as of everything else, Aristophanes was opposed to the changes which he saw going on around him. But although the general tendency of his comedies is unmistakably this, it must not be ignored that, living in a time of transition, Aristophanes, though opposing the new movements, is yet carried along by them to an extent of which he was perhaps himself unconscious.

Based originally on family ties, the small states of antiquity exacted from their members a subordination to the state as much in excess of our notions of what is right, as the Roman *patria potestas* exceeded what we regard as the limits of paternal power. But the intellectual growth of the sons of Athens was too great to be restrained by any such bonds, and Aristophanes lived at a time when these bonds were cracking in all directions. With this intellectual growth Aristophanes had no sympathy—indeed, it may be doubted whether he even understood that it was growth. He only saw that the bonds which had held Athens together were breaking, and his intellectual rank was not high enough to enable him to dimly look into the future, and see that these bonds must break before Athens could take her proud and rightful place in the march of mind and the history of the world.

The Sophists, in declaring that man was the measure of all things, were but giving expression to the struggle of individual genius with the bondage of tradition; and Aristophanes himself, though in the *Clouds* he declares for bondage, yet had outgrown the limits which he desired to impose on growth. Though he

fights against the future, he is none the more in harmony with the present. The discord which exists between him and the citizen community has the same root as that between Plato or Euripides and the Athenians. They have outgrown the old state of things. Hence the contradiction and inconsistencies in Aristophanes. Socrates in the *Clouds* is not more a satire on the movement Aristophanes is attacking, than is Strepsiades on the state of things which he is defending. The new-fangled gods of the *Clouds* are not more ridiculous, or more ridiculed, than the gods of his fathers. While abusing his political opponents for playing upon the greedy and mercenary instincts of the people, Aristophanes relies for victory on outbidding the demagogues in appeals to the very same feelings. At the same time, he betrays his own estimate of his fellow-citizens by basing his arguments for peace—with the exception of some beautiful lyrics in the *Pax*—on the pleasures of eating and drinking and on sensual enjoyments of a lower order. In short, discontented without knowing that the cause of his discontent lay in himself, he turns longing looks to an imaginary past—the creation of his own romantic and poetic spirit—and finds in his dissatisfaction with the present a sufficient proof of the superiority of the "good old times."

Our text of the *Clouds* is in such an unsatisfactory condition that to endeavour to draw any conclusions from it is difficult, and perhaps rash. We know that originally the play was produced in B.C. 423. and was unsuccessful. Whether it was again put on the stage, with the alterations necessitated by such a reproduction, is doubtful. In any case, the *Clouds* as we have it was never performed on the stage. Even in the absence of direct evidence, this would be certain from the fact that with three actors the piece could not be acted as it stands. For instance, neither at the beginning nor at the end of the famous scene of the *Just and the Unjust Reason* is a second's time given for the actors, who have been taking or are about to take the parts of Strepsiades and Socrates, to change their masks and dresses. This difficulty might indeed be explained by assuming that the play, as we have it, was not intended to be acted, but to be read. This hypothesis, however, would not explain the numerous other inconsistencies and pieces of bad workmanship. For example, it would not explain how it is that Strepsiades is at first represented so incapable of taking on sophistic culture that he gives it up in despair, and then subsequently is made to appear as having been so completely successful in this sort of education that he can bewilder all his creditors. Nor would

this hypothesis give any satisfactory explanation of the parabasis (518–562) being thrust into the middle of a scene, instead of coming, as it ought to do, where there is some sort of pause in the action.

These are only two of the many crudities which demonstrate that the *Clouds* cannot have been given to the world by Aristophanes as we have the play. Indeed, probably even in Alexandrine times, the grammarians stated that Aristophanes commenced not merely a revision [1] but re-writing the play,[2] and that we have the play only half re-written. Incomplete the re-writing[3] certainly is, if it is by Aristophanes; but it is also so bungling that even sober criticism may be allowed to wonder whether we have before us Aristophanes' attempt to re-write the *Clouds*, and not really two comedies of Aristophanes jumbled into one by some would-be improver.

If now we recognise that it is unsafe to judge of Aristophanes' attack upon Socrates solely by the *Clouds* as we have the piece, we must look elsewhere for materials to correct false conclusions drawn on this subject from the *Clouds*. Fortunately we find such material in Plato's *Apology*. Plato distinguishes between the misrepresentations of Aristophanes and the charges formally laid against Socrates by his accusers Anytus, Meletus, and Lycon. Aristophanes, Plato says (19 B.C.), represented Socrates as engaged in physical investigations, and walking in the air and other such absurdities, whereas Anytus accused him of corrupting the youth (24B). From this it is, on the whole, fair to infer that Aristophanes had not accused Socrates of perverting the youth, and hence that the "education" of Phidippides, which makes a large part of our *Clouds*, was no part of the *Clouds* as acted. It seems also to follow that the scene of the *Just and the Unjust Reason* did not occur in the *Clouds* of B.C. 423. If these deductions are made from the *Clouds* as we have it, most of the sting is taken out of the attack on Socrates. The picture of the philosopher still remains something more than a caricature, for there are points in it which are distinctly unhistorical. Socrates did not, though the Sophists did, accept money, and Socrates was too practical a man to be guilty of the extravagant asceticism put down to his teaching in the *Clouds*. But these details prevented neither Plato nor Socrates from enjoying the picture; and, apart from this, what remains of the *Clouds* was as much a satire on the people who imagined that the Sophists could impart the secret of fraud with impunity, as it was on the new philosophy itself.

[1] διόρθωσις. [2] διασκευάζειν. [3] διασκευή.

Viewing the *Clouds* as a work of art, we are obviously bound to bear in mind that we have not before us what Aristophanes would have wished us to have, and this will give us a better appreciation of what is really admirable in the work. The manner in which the subject of the *Clouds* was worked out in the original version can be for us only a matter of speculation, not of admiration. But we are still free to enjoy the poetry of Aristophanes' conception of making the clouds of the sky to be his chorus; although some choral odes are lost, those that remain are of exquisite beauty; and above all, in the speech of the *Just Reason*, descriptive of the older education, we have work that for its intrinsic literary merit would of itself establish Aristophanes among the great poets of the world.

In the following year, B.C. 422, the *Wasps* gained the second prize. This comedy is badly constructed. It is mainly based on the absurdities of the Athenian jury system as finally shaped by Pericles. Any Athenian citizen of the legal age who chose to attend the law courts, and act as dikast or juror, received a trifling sum in payment of his services. This payment was intended to compensate the poorer citizens who otherwise could not have afforded the time, and would have been practically excluded from discharging this part of the duties of an Athenian citizen. But Aristophanes represents the mass of the citizens as attending the law courts, not from a feeling of duty, but for the purpose of getting a day's wages without doing a day's work. A further result was that the habit of attending the law courts became a positive mania, according to Aristophanes, with the citizens, who, in their capacity of jurors with a tendency to convict, are represented in the chorus as wasps. Philocleon, suffering from the mania, is confined to the house by his son Bdelycleon, and calls to his assistance the chorus, who, however, together with Philocleon himself, are eventually convinced by Bdelycleon's arguments. Philocleon is induced to forego attendance at court by being allowed to hold mock trials at home, and here the character of the play suddenly changes, and a set of totally different motives, having no necessary or probable connection with the hitherto dominant idea of the piece, begin to work. Bdelycleon, it seems, as indeed his name imports, belongs to the young and fashionable oligarchs, who bore the greatest enmity to the low-caste leaders of the democratic party. Bdelycleon, having rescued his father from political defilement, now proceeds to convert him into a man of fashion. But Philocleon, on his very first entry into society,

gets drunk, and the piece concludes with the comic situations which result from this unsuccessful attempt at culture.

Judged by no higher standard than that of Aristophanes himself, the construction of the *Wasps* is faulty In the other plays of Aristophanes there is only one central idea, and that is of such simplicity and so dominates everything else, that unmistakable and satisfactory unity is thereby given to the piece. In the *Wasps* we have nothing of the kind. The absurdities of the dikasteria are at first the subject of the comedy, and the fact that the chorus is related to this idea is enough to establish its claim to being the central idea of the play. But the latter part of the piece throws all the emphasis on the social and political antithesis implied in the contrasted names, Philocleon and Bdelycleon. In other comedies of Aristophanes the various scenes have, indeed, no connection with each other, but they gain all necessary unity by being all related to and exponent of the central idea. But in the *Wasps* the latter part of the play, if it is not co-ordinate in importance with what has hitherto been considered the leading idea, cannot as a subordinate conception be regarded as having any connection either with the other scenes or with the leading idea. [See Note A.]

Apart from the faults of construction the *Wasps* is amusing. Except when Philocleon and his son are arguing for and against the dikast system—and then the piece comes to rather a standstill—the comedy is full of life, movement, and business. The trial of the two dogs has won a place for itself in the history of literature which is not much threatened by the imitation in the *Plaideurs* of Racine. The concluding scenes are in the boisterous humour of the Old Comedy, and are highly amusing. Turning from the literary and comic side of the piece, we find that the *Wasps* is of much importance for the history of Aristophanes. At the beginning of his public life he threw in his lot with the reactionary party in politics, and lent that party all the fire of his youthful genius. Conspicuously in B.C. 424 in the *Knights* did he identify himself with the Cleon haters, the Bdelycleons. But in B.C. 423 he temporarily left politics, and applied his attention to the other forces which were growing, and which by their expansion threatened to break up the old state of things. In B.C. 422 he returns to politics in the *Wasps*, but he does so only to find that it is impossible to take up his old position. He is no fonder than he was of Cleon—though he is more guarded in his expressions—but if he has undergone little change in that respect, he is otherwise much altered, for

he no longer can identify himself with the Bdelycleons. The fact, concealed from himself, that he was one of those very sons of Athens whose growth was too great for the limits imposed upon them by the old *régime*, manifests itself by imperceptibly elevating him above a party strife which, however important for the history of Athens as a city-state, has little meaning for the greater history of the world. In the *Wasps*, Aristophanes has attained a point of view from which he can see the absurdities of the Bdelycleons as well as of the Philocleons, and in the *Birds*, as we shall see, he seeks a still higher point of view, from which both Bdelycleons and Philocleons shall be invisible.

In B.C. 421, the *Peace* won the second prize. Simplicity in the subject-matter could hardly be carried further than in this play, for it may be summed up in the sentence that a farmer goes to heaven and fetches down peace. The treatment of the subject is as bald as the subject itself. The notion of sending Trygæus up to heaven on the back of a beetle, in parody of the Pegasus of Euripides, and on the authority, as Aristophanes is careful to inform us, of the fable of Æsop, is really amusing, but the rest of the play is neither particularly artistic nor very funny. The rejoicings in the second part of the play have been more than once termed a comic idyll, and some of the lyrics dwelling with affection on the good time when there was peace in the land are indeed beautiful, and amongst Aristophanes' best work. But the interest of the *Peace* lies less in its literary merits than in its relation to the history of the time. It was performed just half a year after the deaths of Cleon and Brasidas, and consequently at a time when the hope of peace was strong. Indeed, we may perhaps reckon this comedy as one of the minor causes which contributed to the establishing, a few weeks afterwards, of the peace—which was no peace—of Nicias.

In B.C. 414, seven years after the *Peace*, comes the next and the best of the comedies of Aristophanes that survive, the *Birds*. The notion that this play was a profound allegory on the Sicilian expedition, is now generally and properly given up. It had indeed no basis, but the tacit assumption that it is not poetry but politics—and party politics—which constitute a great poem. To regard the Sicilian expedition as the subject of the *Birds*, is as though one were to maintain that the Spanish Armada was the subject of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. If any other evidence than the comedy itself were needed to prove that the tendency of the *Birds* is not political or personal, it would be forthcoming in the fact that this play of Aristophanes was

produced at a time when the psephism of Syracosius[1] was in operation.

The motive and the keynote of the whole comedy are given in the first two lines of the epirrhema of the parabasis.[2] The poet will leave Athens, its war, its party strife, its plague of dikasts, its false philosophy, and seek a home in the realms of poetry. His soul takes to itself the wings of a dove, and seeks rest. And it is just because he is no longer tied down by the necessity of writing for a purpose—however good—as a bird is tied by a string, that Aristophanes in the *Birds* soars to a height of poetry, to which he nowhere else attains. Here he rises on the wings of song above earth-born care. Mounting with the lark, he ascends to pure and peaceful upper air, and takes pattern by the birds who know no politics. "Come hither," he says to his fellow-citizens, "come hither, come hither, here shall ye see no enemy but winter and rough weather." The whole comedy, delightfully simple and straightforward in its construction, flows right on as sweetly and joyously as a bird's song, and with precisely the same moral and purpose. It is beautiful, as a poet's midsummer night's dream should be, and nothing more. There is no bitterness in the play, and if the mockery, from which in Aristophanes nothing escapes, occasionally breaks out, it disappears again as suddenly as it came, and by its gloom only serves to enhance the joyous beauty of the whole.

Unique in ancient comedy, there is only one other work in all the literature of antiquity that the *Birds* can be compared with for pure play of fancy, and for sympathy with the beauty of nature; and that other work is the *Bacchæ* of Euripides. But the *Bacchæ*, although in the quality of its work it resembles the *Birds*, is bathed in a sad religious light, so that we more gladly compare the *Birds* with our own *Midsummer Night's Dream*. In both, there is the same lightness of treatment, the same absence of reference to the realities of life, and, above all, in both the purely poetic treatment of a purely poetic conception. The birds themselves are drawn with a delightful tenderness and love, which could only come of intimate and affectionate acquaintance with their nature and their ways. Above all, though for the good of us mortals they talk in human language, the birds remain birds. They are quite different from those of Rabelais in his description of *l'Isle sonnante*, which were indeed birds, "*mais bien ressemblants aux hommes.*" This difference in treatment between Rabelais and Aristophanes is,

[1] μὴ κωμῳδεῖσθαι ὀνόματί τινα. [2] 753.

of course, due to their difference in object, or rather we should perhaps say to the fact that Rabelais had an object, whereas Aristophanes had none. By *l'Isle sonnante* Rabelais meant the Roman Catholic Church, with its bells, and consequently his birds are "*Clergaux, monagaux, prestregaux, abbégaux, évêsgaux, cardingaux, et papegaut, qui est unique en son espèce,*" and so on. If Aristophanes had meant his play as a satire on the Sicilian expedition, his treatment of the subject would not have been purely poetical, his birds would not have been what they are, but like those of Rabelais, "*bien ressemblants aux hommes.*"

What constitutes, however, the charm of the *Birds* and entitles Aristophanes to the name of poet, more than the humour and grace of the play as a play, is the beauty of the lyrics. Here the poet "turns his merry note Unto the sweet bird's throat." What a poet hears when he listens to the birds, what a poet's sympathy teaches him of their hopes and fears, that we may read in the Greek of Aristophanes. His liquid strains of "unpremeditated art," pour forth, like those of the bird, from the mere joy that singing brings him. He gives himself up to his art to carry him where it will. His sole concern is to find expression for the power of song within him, and such free and joyous notes of pure beauty were never heard from a bird again till Shelley's skylark.

Among the lost plays which date from before the Sicilian expedition are the *Merchantmen*, the *Proagon*, and the *Amphiaraus*. The *Merchantmen* is referred to in the parabasis of the *Wasps*,[1] and was probably produced in the previous year. It is thought to take its name from the ships in which was conveyed the corn that was distributed among Athenian citizens *gratis*, after the expedition made against Eubœa about that time. Among the results of this corn-distribution was that of causing much litigation, for it naturally raised the question whether all the claimants were really Athenian citizens. The *Proagon*, produced at the same time as the *Wasps*, was a literary comedy, directed mainly against Euripides. The title means a preliminary dramatic performance of some kind. The *Amphiaraus*, produced in the same year as the *Birds*, was, like the *Birds*, of a non political character, and probably turned upon a cure supposed to be, but not really effected by, the miraculous power of the deceased hero, Amphiaraus. Possibly, we may also refer to this period the *Lemniæ*, an attack upon the worship of Bendis, the *Farmers*, an argument for peace resembling the *Acharnians*, the *Heroes*, *Triphales*, *Geras*, and *Anagyrus*.

[1] 1037.

The *Lysistrata*, *Thesmophoriazusæ*, and *Ecclesiazusæ*, form a group on which it is convenient to make a remark of general application to the plays of Aristophanes. It is generally admitted now that not even these comedies of Aristophanes are immoral in purpose or tendency. As to their nakedness, on the one hand, it is historically unjustifiable to convict Aristophanes of indecency by reference to the standard of the present day. He knows no fig-leaves, but he knew no Genesis. On the other hand, it is historically equally unjustifiable to convict the present day of prudery or hypocrisy by reference to the standard of Aristophanes. On no grounds does it seem justifiable to import his patriotism as an excuse. More than this it is unnecessary to say. Mr. Symonds, in his admirable "Studies of the Greek Poets," has treated the question boldly and well, and it is impossible to do better than read him on this, as on all other points of which he treats.

The *Lysistrata*, produced in B.C. 411 at a time of great distress in Athens just before the establishment of the tyranny of the Four Hundred, is tinged by the general melancholy of the time, and in places almost becomes pathetic. The subject is worked out consistently, but not with the wealth of inventive power which characterises the best comedies of Aristophanes. The character-drawing, however, is good, and some of the situations are very comic. Like the *Ecclesiazusæ* and the *Plutus*, the *Lysistrata* has no parabasis, and it is further distinguished by the fact that the chorus is divided into two halves, each consisting of twelve choreutæ, one half being of men, the other of women.

The *Thesmophoriazusæ* was produced in B.C. 411, probably at the Great Dionysia after the overthrow of the Four Hundred, which is alluded to.[1] In point of construction, the *Thesmophoriazusæ* is a great advance on any of the previous surviving comedies. Although situations, action, and plot are, in Greek drama, generally in so rudimentary a stage of development that they can scarcely be said to exist, in the *Thesmophoriazusæ* they are all to be found. The women of Athens, enraged at the misogynist tragedies of Euripides, resolve to take counsel at the Thesmophoria, a feast to which only women were admitted, how to kill Euripides by way of revenge. Hearing this, Euripides eventually persuades a relation to disguise himself as a woman, attend the Thesmophoria, and plead for him. The relation, Mnesilochus, is, however, discovered by the women to

[1] *Thesm.* 670, 808, 1140. Other events, fixing the date, are alluded to 805, 860, 1060.

be a man, and is handed over to the law for punishment. Eventually, however, Euripides effects a compromise with the women, and by a stratagem cheats the law of its victim. Here we have an undeniable plot, and although what is really incidental and subordinate, *i.e.* the rescue of Mnesilochus, comes to occupy more room than what is logically the end of the piece, *i.e.* the preservation of Euripides, still there is a great deal of action, and in the discovery of Mnesilochus a striking situation. The play is thoroughly non-political; the humour consists largely in the parodies of Euripides, which occupy a large part of the comedy and are extremely amusing. The choral odes are short and unimportant, and the parabasis is cut down.[1]

The next of the surviving comedies, the *Frogs*, was produced some six years after the *Thesmophoriazusæ*, in B.C. 405, shortly after the victory of Arginusæ and before the final overthrow of Athens in the Peloponnesian war. In point of construction it is greatly inferior to the *Thesmophoriazusæ*. The *Frogs* falls into two parts, which have, indeed, an external, but no internal connection with each other. The first part consists of Dionysus' journey to the nether world, and is burlesque in character. The second part consists of a comparison of Æschylus and Euripides, and is literary and learned in character. The play gained the first prize, and is said to have been repeated, with some alterations, in consequence of its success. In later times the work has enjoyed great popularity, though possibly not altogether on grounds of pure taste. There are, indeed, passages of poetic beauty which belong to Aristophanes' best work, such as the choruses of the first part; and the whole range of humour, from the roughest horse-play to the most delicate allusions, is displayed in this comedy, but with commentators and students the elaborate and extensive parodies have been the matter of most importance.

The second part of the *Frogs* is practically an attack upon Euripides, and the justice of the attack has been in later times a matter of much discussion. Both the opinions of Euripides and the literary form in which he expressed them are unsparingly denounced by Aristophanes. In his opinions Euripides sympathised with the intellectual and forward movements of his time. Aristophanes neither sympathised with nor under-

[1] Subsequently Aristophanes wrote another *Thesmophoriazusæ*. This *Thesmophoriazusæ* II. was not a διόρθωσις or διασκευή of *Th.* I., but was an entirely new play, which, however, as being a satire on women, received the name of the previous comedy, to indicate its general nature and tendency.

stood these intellectual movements. In order to take her place in the intellectual history of the world, Athens had to lose her importance in the political history of Greece. But Aristophanes did not understand this. He only saw that if the new tendencies were victorious, Athens, glorious in the past, could no longer be what she once had been. From his own point of view Aristophanes may have been right, but for us his point of view is wrong. The Persian wars once over, the destinies of mankind depended on the philosophers, not on the hoplites, of Athens. Aristophanes, however, thought more of the hoplites than of the philosophers.

Before proceeding to consider Aristophanes' criticisms on Euripides as a poet, we ought to say one word on the immorality with which the comedian charges the tragedian. On this point we have in the plays of Euripides a good deal of evidence before us, and there is consequently little excuse for a hesitating decision on the question. It is, however, necessary to remember that in polemics, as in other things, the standard of decency is a shifting one. Terms which one age would hesitate to apply to the most abandoned villain are in another century of such frequent use as practically to be meaningless. Bearing this in mind, and remembering the extremely excitable nature of the Greeks, we shall not think it extravagant to say that the charges of immorality which Aristophanes brings against Euripides and his plays are simply Aristophanes' way of saying that on various points he totally disagrees with Euripides. In his literary criticism Aristophanes is more fortunate. Living at a time when the old was giving place to the new, Euripides shows in his work all the inconsistencies of methods and uncertainty of object which necessarily characterise a transition period. This gives Aristophanes a great field for criticism, which, though often one-sided, is often just. Aristophanes, not only as a poet, and a great poet, possessed taste, but he also enjoyed the comic power necessary for the most telling expression of his criticism, and a better poet than Euripides would have escaped scarcely better from such a slashing attack. Indeed, even Æschylus, the poet of Aristophanes' own choice, does not by any means come off scot-free.

After a long interval comes, in B.C. 393, the next of the surviving comedies, the *Ecclesiazusæ*. This, on the whole, is inferior to the rest of Aristophanes' plays. Like many of them, the *Ecclesiazusæ* really consists of a series of scenes illustrating a simple theme. Inasmuch, however, as in this case the theme (that community of property and women is practically impos-

sible) is of an abstract nature, the *Ecclesiazusæ* lacks concentration and admits of no plot, even in the sense in which we may speak of Aristophanes' plots. The women of Athens disguise themselves as men, attend the ecclesia, and by a snatch-vote decree that the state shall henceforth be governed by women. The women then institute communism, and a series of scenes, most of them amusing, follows. Eventually the play stops, not because any catastrophe has supervened, or because any appropriate period in the development of the subject has been reached, but solely because the play must stop somewhere; and this is the more unsatisfactory because, although the scenes chosen to illustrate the practical consequences of communism show clearly that the object of the piece is to demonstrate the impossibility of communism, yet when the play ends, communism is apparently left in possession of the field. The *Ecclesiazusæ* bears no reference to contemporary political events or personages, but simply enjoys itself at the expense of a philosophical theory, which is stated also in the *Republic* of Plato. In conclusion, the choric odes are of no great merit; there is no parodos, properly speaking, and there are no parabases or stasima.

In the *Plutus*, as in the *Ecclesiazusæ*, there is neither plot nor that heightening of the interest towards the end of the play which, in the *Acharnians*, for instance, takes the place of catastrophe and dénoûment in a plot properly so called. Further, the *Plutus*, like the *Ecclesiazusæ*, consists of a series of scenes illustrating an abstract theme. The theme of the *Plutus* is the desirability of the good being rich. This is the purpose for which, and the plea on which, Chremes, who has been fortunate enough to catch the blind god of riches, persuades him to allow himself to be cured of his blindness. The god must have his sight to see who are good. But although this is the avowed purpose of the play, there is much in the piece that is not merely inconsistent, but irreconcilable with this avowed purpose. When Plutus has recovered his sight, we find scenes following which at one moment seem to show that the good only have been made rich and the bad poor, and at another can only be understood on the assumption that everybody indiscriminately has been made rich. In fact, Poverty, after an argument, is utterly banished from the earth, and the gods are reduced to the utmost need, because, as all men have become rich, no man has any motive for making offerings to the gods. There is really no unity of purpose in the *Plutus*, and if the play, as we have it, came from the hands of Aristophanes, then in his old age he lost his certainty of touch, and being unable to conceive clearly

his own purpose, wavered between two inconsistent ends without realising their incompatibility.[1]

The *Plutus* is sometimes said to belong to the Middle Comedy, and sometimes to be a transition stage between the Old and the Middle. If we look merely at the scenes which illustrate the desirability of the good being made rich, we see that they have the moral tendency which is a feature of the Middle Comedy. If, however, we look at the scenes which illustrate the consequences of all men being rich, we are reminded of the *Ecclesiazusæ*, which illustrates the consequences of communism, and of the *Clouds*, which illustrates the consequences of philosophy; or again, looking at the distress of the gods when their supplies are stopped, we are reminded of the *Birds*. There is, then, in the *Plutus* a strain of the Old as well as of the Middle Comedy.[2]

To this period of Aristophanes' literary career, finally, must be referred those lost plays whose titles show that they dealt with mythological subjects, and therefore do not belong to the earlier time when comedy was political in its nature. Such plays are the *Daughters of Danäus*, the *Phenician Women*, the *Centaur*,[3] in which Aristophanes, like Epicharmus, made fun of the tremendous appetite of Heracles; the *Dædalus*,[4] in which Leda appeared with her egg like a hen. There probably also belong to this period the *Horæ*, the *Telmessenses*, and the *Polyidus*, which were directed against the new religions now creeping into Athens. Polyidus, according to the story, recalled Glaucus

[1] It characterises the taste of the Byzantine scholars that the *Plutus* was their favourite comedy.

[2] Indeed, so distinct are the two strains, that it has been maintained that in the *Plutus*, as in the *Clouds* and the *Wasps*, we have an amalgamation or "contamination" of two distinct comedies, and that, at least in the case of the *Plutus*, one of these two comedies belongs to the Middle, and not to Aristophanic comedy. Traditionally, however, our *Plutus* is regarded as having been produced in B.C. 388, and as being a revision (διόρθωσις rather than διασκευή) of an earlier form of the *Plutus* produced in B.C. 408. Thus *Plutus* I. possessed the choral odes which are wanting in *Plutus* II. But the traditional view has difficulties of its own; for instance, a scholiast commenting on one passage says this passage is taken from *Plutus* II., as though he had not got *Plutus* II. before him.

[3] This comedy had an alternative title, *Dramata*, which was also apparently an alternative title for another comedy, the *Niobus*. But it is uncertain whether there was any difference between the *Centaur* and the *Niobus*, except that one was a later version of the other. It is not even certain that the *Niobus* was by Aristophanes; and unless Niobus was a male and comic Niobe, the subject of the play cannot be guessed.

[4] The comedian Plato also wrote a comedy under this title, and there seem to have been recriminations between the two poets on the subject of plagiarism. The same charge was brought by Aristophanes against Eupolis (*Clouds*, 553), and against some unknown poet (Fr. 18 of the *Anagyrus*), and by Plato against some poet, possibly Aristophanes (Frag. of the *Pædario*).

to life; Telmessus, we learn from Cicero,[1] was famous for its augury; and in the fragments of the *Horæ* we find Sabazius, a new god, mentioned.[2] Other comedies of this period probably are the *Pelargi* or *Storks*, in which the bird's reputed piety was perhaps contrasted with the impiety of the Athenians; the *Gerytades*, a play whose name is unintelligible to us, but which seems to have had a subject similar to that of the *Frogs*; the *Tageniste* or *Men of the Frying-pan*, in which flatterers and their cupboard love filled the main place. The last two plays by Aristophanes, the *Cocalus* and *Æolosicon*, were put on the stage by his son Araros. Cocalus was the king of the Camicii, who gave Dædalus protection against Minos, and even boiled Minos to death in a bath. The name Æolo-sicon seems to be a compound of the names of Æolus and Sicon, of whom the latter was a cook of much celebrity. The hero of the play then combined probably the attributes as well as the names of Æolus and Sicon; and if nations, like men, grow more critical in culinary matters as they grow older, probably this tendency was the object of Aristophanes' satire. Both the *Cocalus* and the *Æolosicon*, according to the author of the Greek life of Aristophanes, belonged in character to the comedy of Menander and Philemon. They had no chorus or parabasis, and they had plots.

APPENDICES TO CHAPTER VII.

A.—"THE WASPS."

THE discrepancies between the two parts of the *Wasps* have given rise to the conjecture that here too, as in the case of the *Clouds*, we have an amalgamation of two distinct comedies. This view is borne out by a closer examination of the comedy. Philocleon is at first represented as belonging to the class of poor dikasts, to whom the pay was of importance, and then as belonging to a distinctly higher class of society. Again, Philocleon gets into all sorts of difficulties, and the play leaves him in them. Further, the chorus is alternately represented as having the energy and vigour of young wasps and as enfeebled by old age. (Contrast 1060–1069 with 1070–1090, 1091–1100 with 1101–1121; so too in 441–456 the chorus utterly and incomprehen-

[1] *De Div.* i. 41: Telmessus in Caria est, qua in urbe excellit haruspicum disciplina.

[2] The worship of Sabazius, attacked by Aristophanes, had become quite fashionable in the time of Theophrastus, for the late-learner (viii.) "when initiated into the rites of Sabazius, will be eager to acquit himself best in the eyes of the priest" (Jebb's trans.)

sibly belies the activity which it displays immediately before and immediately after). This lends colour to the conjecture that the first half of the *Wasps* is mainly taken from the original comedy of that name; whereas parts of the first half and most of the second half are taken from some other comedy—possibly the *Geras* or *Old Age*, in which, as in the *Wasps* (1333 f. and 1351 f.), an old man is made young again. Other passages which are probably interpolated are the very inartistic prologue scene, 8–135; the scenes with the supernumerary chorus of boys, 248–272 and 290–317, who are not wanted to carry the wasps' lanterns, for the wasps carry them themselves, 218 and 246; the financial scene, 686–697, in which the cost to the state of the dikast system, 150 talents, is absurdly high, and has probably been transferred from some context in which the sum represents the expenditure not on the dikasts, but on the ecclesia, the Boulê, theorica, &c.

B.—THE PARABASIS.

The divisions into which a comedy falls were the same as those of tragedy, with one exception. In a comedy, as in a tragedy, the ode which the chorus sang when it first entered was called the Parodos; those which it sang when standing in its usual place between the altar and the stage were called Stasima; the parts between two stasima were called Episodes; and that before the first stasimon was the Prologue; and that following the last stasimon the Exodos. But the Parabasis was peculiar to comedy. The point at which the Parabasis occurred was not fixed by any definite considerations, but was inserted by the poet wherever he thought the action of the comedy rendered it most convenient. What characterises the Parabasis is that it bears no relation, as do the stasima, to the action of the play, but expounds the author's views, as the views of the author, on any matter of interest on which he thinks fit to directly address the audience. It is thus not only characteristic of comedy, but is probably the oldest element of comedy. It seems to be a survival from the time before comedy, when at the conclusion of the choral ode to Dionysus, the leader of the chorus, who was also the poet, came forward and made his jests and comments on the topics and persons of the time. Possibly the name Parabasis is a survival from this stage in the origin of comedy, and refers to the "coming forward" of the poet to deliver his views; but the name is generally referred to the "march by" of the chorus, when it left its post between the altar and the stage and marched round the orchestra by the spectators. A complete Parabasis (in the widest sense of the word) consisted of seven parts. First came the Kommation, a few lines delivered by the Coryphæus dismissing the actors who at this point left the stage), and notifying the audience that the Parabasis was about to begin. Next came the Parabasis proper (in the strict sense of the word), delivered by the Coryphæus, who, on behalf of the poet, stated the poet's defence of himself or his plays, or criticised his rivals, or otherwise glorified or justified himself. The Parabasis is generally in anapæsts or trochaics, and is concluded by the Pnigos or Makron, verses still spoken by the Coryphæus on the same subject as the Parabasis, and gaining their name because they had to be rattled out in one breath, and thus left the Coryphæus breathless and the audience laughing. These three parts, the Kommation, the Parabasis, and the Pnigos, constituted the first half of the Parabasis; and here it should be noticed that the Komma-

tion and the Pnigos were sometimes dispensed with. The second half of the Parabasis commenced with the Strophe, which was sung by the chorus, and was generally an ode to some god. This was followed by the Epirrhema, delivered by a single choreutes, probably the Coryphæus, and ridiculing some public event or person. Then, continuing the same subject, came the Antistrophe, sung by the chorus, and corresponding in metre and music to the strophe. Finally came the Antepirrhema, delivered by a single choreutes, and corresponding, as the name implies, to the epirrhema: this concluded the Parabasis. Whether the strophe and antistrophe were sung each by the whole chorus, or by the two hemichoria respectively is uncertain. If by the whole chorus. then probably the epirrhema and the antepirrhema were delivered by the Coryphæus; if by the hemichoria, then probably the leaders of the hemichoria delivered the epirrhema and antepirrhema. Sometimes there are two Parabases in one play. This seems to be a survival from the time when the chorus was the dominant element in the worship of Dionysus, and the actors were only reliefs to the chorus.

The Parabasis of the *Acharnians* is divided as follows:—

First Parabasis: — Kommation, 626–627. Parabasis, 628–658. Pnigos, 659–664. Strophe, 665–675. Epirrhema, 676–691. Antistrophe, 692–701. Antepirrhema, 702–718.

Second Parabasis:—Kommation, 1143–1149. Strophe, 1150–1161. Antistrophe, 1162–1173.

Those of the *Knights* as follows:—

First Parabasis: — Kommation, 498–506. Parabasis, 507–546. Pnigos, 547–550. Strophe, 551–564. Epirrhema, 565–580. Antistrophe, 581–594. Antepirrhema, 595–610.

Second Parabasis: — Strophe, 1263–1273. Epirrhema, 1274–1289. Antistrophe, 1290–1299. Antepirrhema, 1300–1315.

CHAPTER VIII.

MIDDLE COMEDY.

In order to understand how the Middle Comedy differs, on the one hand, from Old Comedy, and, on the other, from the New, it is necessary to understand, first, the fundamental identity of these three stages of comedy. They are fundamentally identical, because they are one and all Attic Comedy, and one and all reflect the manners and the life of the age in which they occur. It is true that the comedy of Aristophanes does not reflect the philosophy of Socrates or the policy of Cleon with historical accuracy, but it does what is as valuable—it reflects them as Aristophanes saw them; and though the Middle and New Comedy are mirrors of their time, they are shattered mirrors, for we possess no complete play belonging to these stages of Attic Comedy, but only fragments. The three stages of comedy, then, are alike, inasmuch as they all reflect the Athens of their time: the later forms developed out of the earlier, and they

differ because Athens differed at these three periods. This is not the sole cause of difference, but it is the one which we will first consider.

Roughly speaking, the Old Comedy ends at the battle of Ægospotami, and the Middle Comedy at the battle of Chæronea. From the end of the Peloponnesian War to the battle of Chæronea, Athens was still free, although she was no longer the first among the cities of Greece. After "that dishonest victory, at Chæronea, fatal to liberty," she, with the rest of Greece, was no longer free. The period, then, between Ægospotami and Chæronea is politically and socially much more akin to the time preceding than to the time following it. The period between Ægospotami and Chæronea is the last period of the creative power of Attic literature; after Chæronea begins the imitative age. The Middle Comedy, then, bears more resemblance to the Old than to the New. The comedy of Aristophanes drew its material from everything which had an interest for the citizens of Athens, politics, philosophy, religion, science, literature, art, and scandal. The New Comedy drew its material from that which most interested every Athenian of the time, his private life; it was a comedy of manners, and its subject was practically love only. Between these two well-defined stages came the Middle Comedy, which, like the period it reflects, was a stage of transition. Like the New Comedy, it had its love-plays, but its subjects were mostly the same as those of the Old Comedy. Plato and the Academy took the place of Socrates; Euripides was still attacked, although by that time there were to be found also comedians to defend him; mythology was still a fertile source of parody and ridicule; but from politics the Middle Comedy drew but scantily or not at all.

For this difference between the Old and the Middle Comedy, the reason always given is that after the Peloponnesian war Athens was politically played out. Aristophanes, it is said, wrote political comedies because politics interested his audience; the writers of the Middle Comedy, like those of the New, did not write political comedies, for the reason that their hearers did not take an interest in politics. But this would not seem to be the case: never was the Assembly better attended, and never had the oratory of its speakers attained to the level which it reached in the period that culminates in Demosthenes. Some other reason must be sought why politics were not reflected in the Middle Comedy, and the same reason must explain why the litigious tendencies of the Athenians, stronger at this time than when Aristophanes wrote the *Wasps*,



furnished no more matter for the Middle Comedy than did politics. The explanation is that the Assembly and the Law Courts were not less, but more interesting than ever, and this was the result of the growth of oratory. The first of the Ten Attic Orators was Antiphon, whose name is associated with the establishment of the Thirty Tyrants towards the end of the Peloponnesian war; and we may well say that the period of the Middle Comedy is the time of the Orators. For the development of oratory it is necessary that the audience should be critical. Badly educated hearers demand speeches not beyond their own powers of comprehension and appreciation. The growth, therefore, of oratory in the period between the Peloponnesian war and the battle of Chæronea would of itself prove that politics deeply engaged the attention of the Athenians of that time. But in order to understand fully how much they engaged the attention of the Athenians, it is necessary to remember that the Athenians were not a nation of readers; they took in their literature through their ears, and not through their eyes. Further, the largest audience which a writer could get was the Assembly or the Law Courts. Again, at this time, with the exception of Plato, the literary genius of Athens was all directed to oratory. From these considerations it follows that the Athenians, who all the year got their literary food from the Law Courts and the Assembly, required a change of diet at the festivals of Dionysus; and the writers of comedy again, doubtless, felt not only that this change was demanded from them, if they wished to be successful, but also that they were unable to rival the speakers in the Assembly and the Courts on their own ground. They had before them the warning of tragedy. Writers of tragedy had indeed entered on the contest; Euripides had imported into tragedy much that was only appropriate in lawsuits, but the measure of his ill success may show us how little likely it is that his successors in tragedy, lacking his genius, were successful where he failed. The main reason then that, in not reflecting politics, the Middle Comedy differed from the Old was that politics engaged the attention of the Athenians more than ever, but engaged them only in the Assembly, and when treated oratorically.

But the Peloponnesian war had broken the spirit of the Athenians thus far; they would talk in the Assembly but not act in the field; and this fact is of importance as explaining why, although the Middle Comedy ceased to be political, it yet did not become the comedy of private life, as did the New. In the time of the Old Comedy, the public duties of a citizen occu-

pied most of his life, for he had not only to take in the Assembly his share of governing the country, but he had at all times to be prepared to fight for his country. There was, however, a tendency to differentiate these functions, which was worked out in the time of the New Comedy. Pericles was both a general and the leader of the Assembly. By the time of Demosthenes, it was impossible to combine these two functions; Demosthenes was an orator, but not a general. The same tendency was at work amongst the body of Athenian citizens as amongst its leaders; and in the time of Demosthenes the military duties of the citizens were frequently delegated to paid mercenaries. But although the Athenian citizen of the time of the Middle Comedy was putting off his military duties, he had not yet become, as after Chæronea—when the employment of mercenaries had resulted in the loss of freedom—he did become, wholly absorbed in the relations of private life. Although he did not go in person abroad on foreign service, and consequently took but little interest in what was going on in Olynthus or in Thrace, he still had a vote and a voice in determining the destinies of his country, and this is the reason why at that time comedy could not exclusively devote itself to private life.

We began by saying that the difference in the ages they reflect is not the only difference between the three stages of comedy. One obvious distinction is, that the chorus is practically absent from the New and the Middle Comedy. Originally the duty of providing and paying for a chorus fell upon some rich citizen chosen by the "inspectors"[1] of the tribe to represent his tribe. The Peloponnesian war impoverished Athens, and in consequence sometimes, even in the time of the Old Comedy, no choregus and no chorus were appointed for comedy. What was the custom between the end of the Peloponnesian war and the battle of Chæronea we do not know, but the difficulty which was experienced in providing a chorus for tragedy—the expense was thrown on two members of the same tribe or of two tribes—makes it probable that a chorus was only rarely provided during the period of the Middle Comedy. From B.C. 306 the evidence of inscriptions shows that it was no longer the custom to elect a choregus from a single tribe or from two tribes, but to elect an agonothetes, who took (or might decline to take) the duty of producing both the tragedy and the comedy, sometimes furnishing a chorus and sometimes not. Some years no agonothetes probably was elected, and some years he would furnish no chorus either tragic or comic, but simply produce a

[1] ἐπιμεληταί.



tragedy and a comedy without a chorus; and sometimes, we may conjecture, he would furnish a chorus for tragedy but not for comedy. On the whole, then, it would seem that it was rather the exception than the rule for plays of the Middle and New Comedies to have a chorus.

As to the cause of this, Horace has given wide currency to the idea that the chorus was suspended by law on account of the license of the poets of the Old Comedy. But there is no warrant for this; nor is the reason wholly to be found in the impoverishment of the citizens; for although the Peloponnesian war may have produced some distress, in the time of the New Comedy Athens seems to have enjoyed considerable material prosperity. The reason is that the growth of the drama pushed the chorus on one side. The drama at Athens had reached the point at which further development was impossible, if the chorus was still to be retained. Euripides, in his attempt to show "the very age and body of the time his form and pressure," was perpetually hampered by the chorus He wished to take the forward step which afterwards was taken by the drama, but it was made impossible for him to do so by the restrictions under which tragedy as it was conceived at Athens lay. The development of modern drama could only come after those restrictions had been removed. From some of them comedy at Athens had at all times been free. The tragic poet was bound, the comic poet was not, to adhere to myths. Tragedy had always to remember that it was a religious function, but comedy was apt to forget its religious functions. To reflect the life of the time was almost as essential to comedy as it was inconsistent with tragedy. Science, rhetoric, and philosophy, when introduced by Euripides are felt to jar with the mythical scenes in which they are placed; but in comedy no such discrepancy is felt. The characters which Euripides drew after average Athenians are ill at ease when appearing under the garb and title of heroes of mythology; but in the comedy of Menander such characters moved in the same surroundings as they did in life. The one obstacle which prevented the illusion of comedy, when it undertook to represent real life, from being perfect was the chorus. This doubtless was first felt by the writers of comedy, who would, in consequence, put but little pressure on a reluctant agonothetes or choregus to produce a chorus. The people, on the other hand, soon came to appreciate the superiority of comedy without a chorus, and consequently showed no anxiety to elect an agonothetes to provide a chorus; or, if a chorus were provided, they paid such scant attention to the choral odes, that

there was not much inducement for a wealthy citizen again to furnish comedy with a chorus.

What the difference between Middle and New Comedy was with regard to the chorus, we have no direct evidence to show; we are reduced to conjecture, and it seems probable that in this, as in other respects, the Middle Comedy was transitional, and that the chorus gradually decreased in importance, being much less frequent in Middle than in Old Comedy, and practically disappearing in the New. We do not know certainly that there was no chorus in the New Comedy; indeed, one authority speaks of Menander as finally abandoning the chorus, which would imply that until his time the chorus still survived, though with little practical importance. This is what might have been expected, and is illuminating for the history of the Greek drama. Euripides, in his attempt to develop tragedy in directions untrodden by his predecessors, devoted much labour to the production of more complex plots, and to the working out of domestic scenes as a subject for tragedy. In both these experiments he was clogged by the chorus. It remained for Menander to throw off this clog altogether. If any confirmation were needed of the fact that Menander took up the struggle where Euripides left it, it would be found in the similarity of the circumstances of the two poets; for the comedian, like the tragedian, was impelled to put the chorus on one side by the development of his drama in the direction of domestic scenes and complexity of plot. Greek drama originated in the chorus, and finally threw it aside altogether.

Horace is also responsible for the idea that the Middle and New Comedy differ from the Old in being less abusive, and that this fact was due to the action of the law. It is not, however, exactly true that personalities were wanting in the Middle Comedy, though they were in the New; nor is it true that covert attacks were made upon individuals, who were pilloried under fictitious names on the stage. We have the titles of fifty or sixty plays of the Middle Comedy which take their names from real persons, and although doubtless not all of these were attacked, some probably were. But there was a difference between the Old and Middle Comedy in the mode of attack, as we learn from Aristotle: that of the Old Comedy was abuse; that of the Middle, raillery; and thus in this respect also the Middle Comedy was but the stage which Attic Comedy passed through in its transition from the Old to the New.

In point of plot, the difference between the Old and the New Comedy is unmistakable; but with regard to the Middle Comedy

it is harder to form an opinion. A play of the Old Comedy consisted of a series of scenes having no connection with each other, but deriving their unity from their connection with the central idea of the piece, which was some such simple theme as that "peace is desirable." The plays of Menander, on the other hand, had an intrigue and a plot; the scenes developed out of each other and ended in a dénoûment. This is indeed almost implied in the statement that his were generally love-comedies, which naturally result in a marriage after the obstacles to the course of true love have been removed. In two respects Menander's treatment of the plot reminds us of Euripides; he employed a prologue, and, if not a *deus ex machina*, at any rate artificial means of proving at the last that, for instance, the heroine, hitherto supposed to be a hetæra, is really a free-born Athenian—a discovery which was the indispensable condition of the marriages with which his plays ended. So far as our scanty information extends, there seems to be no evidence that prologues were common, if used at all, in Middle Comedy, though "recognitions" certainly occurred; and as the subjects of the Middle Comedy more frequently resembled those of the Old than those of the New, it seems probable that the treatment also rather resembled that of the Old. Many of the Middle Comedies do indeed take their name from hetæræ; but they seem to have been treated of in those plays in their capacity of public characters rather than, as in the New, in connection with private life. A further consideration tending to show that the plots of the New Comedy were superior in interest and illusion to those of the Middle is the fact that by the time of the New Comedy Aristotle's works on the drama were beginning to have their effect. The period after Chæronea was one of study of the great dramatists, of reflection on their methods, and of conscious employment of the knowledge thus gained. Aristotle laid it down in the *Poetics* that the plot was the most important element of a play, and Menander is reported to have said on some occasion that his play was all but ready; he had worked out the plot, and had only the verses to write.

In respect of the characters put on the stage by the Middle and New Comedy, there seems to have been little difference. Both show a resemblance to Sicilian comedy, which might be expected from the similarity of the circumstances under which the later Athenian comedy and that of Epicharmus were produced. Epicharmus was precluded from taking political subjects, and consequently sketched his characters from the society in which he found himself. These characters, however, were

not individuals, but types; and in this respect the writers of the Middle and New Comedy resemble Epicharmus. The parasites, the braggarts, the boors, the fish-dealers, the lovers, the mistresses, the cooks, and the slaves of the later Attic Comedy are all types, not individuals, and are most of them types which had occurred previously in the works of Epicharmus. How far these characters were from possessing individuality we may understand when we remember that each of these types had its own mask, and that, *e.g.* the parasite, in whatever play by whatever author he appeared, was recognised the moment he entered the stage by the mask he wore. When a mask appeared with a dark complexion, thick lips, and a flat nose, everybody knew that he was the Boor; when another entered with a dark complexion, a hooked nose, and a beaming appearance, with a dash of the prize fighter in it,[1] the audience knew without being told that he was the Parasite. The nearest approach to individuality was that these species were in some cases divided into subspecies. Thus the young hetæra wore a simple fillet round her hair, the elderly hetæra side ringlets, the expensive one much gold in her hair, and so on; which shows the care that had been devoted to working out this character. Although the circumstances under which the later comedians at Athens wrote were much the same as with Epicharmus, and would lead to the same sort of work, probably the Attic comedians borrowed directly from Epicharmus; for we find them in the Middle Comedy also adopting the parodies of mythological subjects which Epicharmus had instituted with great success. These, however, practically disappeared in the New Comedy; and with regard to character-drawing, the difference seems to have been that Menander and his contemporaries attained to greater skill than their predecessors. Unfortunately, we cannot judge for ourselves on this point; but the "Characters" of Theophrastus, which date from the same time as the New Comedy, are in all probability work of the same stamp as the character-drawing of Menander; and in the Boastful Man of Theophrastus we probably have something very like the Boaster of comedy.

Our knowledge of the poets and plays of the Middle Comedy comes from grammarians, lexicographers, writers of anthologies, and largely from Athenæus, who says that he had read more than eight hundred plays of the Middle Comedy. Unfortunately, Athenæus concentrated his attention, in the "Deipnosophists," on culinary matters, and consequently his quotations relate

[1] τῷ δὲ παρασίτῳ μᾶλλον κατέαγε τὰ ὦτα (prize-fighters in Greece got their ears broken), Pollux iv. 148, from which the above is taken.

chiefly to the kitchen, and leave us in ignorance of other and important points. We gain some information on the difference between the three stages of comedy from the work "On the Difference of the Comedies" by Platonius, a Greek rhetorician of uncertain date. The value of the information, with regard to the lives and works of the comedians, which we get from grammarians, scholiasts, and lexicographers, varies in each case. These writers had at times good authorities to draw from. The Didascaliæ of Aristotle we have mentioned. Theophrastus, the greatest of Aristotle's pupils, wrote a work "On Comedy" which is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius[1] and Athenæus.[2] The latter author also mentions[3] a similar work by Chamæleon, another pupil of Aristotle. Philochorus belonged to about the same date (B.C. 280), and wrote a work on the dramatic contests at Athens, which is referred to by Suidas and probably quoted in Athenæus.[4] At Alexandria, Callimachus, the librarian of Alexandria, composed a catalogue of didascaliæ;[5] and his successor, Eratosthenes, wrote a book in twelve volumes "On Comedy," quoted by Photius.[6] At Pergamum, Crates, Carystius, and Herodicus[7] devoted themselves to the history of the drama; and in the time of Augustus, Didymus wrote works on comedy from which Meineke[8] thinks Hesychius, Photius, and others largely borrowed.

The most important poet of the Middle Comedy was Alexis, who, although he was a citizen of Athens, was born at Thurii, probably about B.C. 390, and died not before B.C. 288. He is said to have written 245 plays, and we have fragments of about 140 of them. These are, however, not sufficient to enable us to form any very good judgment of his poetical powers, and unfortunately we have in no ancient writer any detailed criticism of his work. The great age which he reached carried him into the time of the New Comedy, and he presents some of its features; but, on the whole, he belongs undoubtedly to the Middle Comedy. We find some political allusions in his fragments; for instance, he joins with the Macedonian party in making jest of the distinction which was made in the pseudo-Demosthenic speech on the Halonnesus between Philip's "giving" the island of Halonnesus to the Athenians and "giving

[1] v. 2. 47. [2] vi. 261D. [3] ix. 374A and 406D. [4] xi. 464F.
[5] *τίναξ τῶν κατὰ χρόνους καὶ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενομένων διδασκαλιῶν.*
[6] *Sub voce εὔκλεια*
[7] Crates composed *ἀναγραφὰς δραμάτων*, Ath. viii. 336E; Carystius, *περὶ διδασκαλιῶν*, Ath. vi. 235E; Herodicus, *κωμῳδούμενα*, Ath. xiii. 586A; and Harpocration, *s.v.* Σινώπη. [8] H. C. G. 14.

it back" to them. Again, the titles of some of his plays, *e.g.* the *Helen*, the *Seven against Thebes*, &c., show that they were on mythological subjects—a kind of play which the Middle Comedy borrowed from Epicharmus, and was fertile in. It is also a mark that he belongs to the Middle Comedy that he has allusions to the philosophers Plato, Aristippus, Xenocrates, and makes joke of the vegetarianism of the Pythagoreans.[1] Further, he has allusions to literary men (*e.g.* Araros, the son of Aristophanes), and parodies Euripides. The quality which is most conspicuous in the fragments of Alexis is his refinement.

Next to Alexis, the most important poet of the Middle Comedy was Antiphanes, who was born about B.C. 408, began to produce plays about B.C. 388, and died about B.C. 332. There is some doubt as to the place of his birth; but it is important as showing the decline of the creative powers of Athens, that Antiphanes, like Alexis, was not an Athenian. The number of plays which he wrote is uncertain, statements varying from 280 to 360, but we still possess the titles or fragments of about 150. The number was, at any rate, so large, that it is probable not all the comedies of Antiphanes were intended to be produced on the stage. Such plays as he wrote without intending to produce them on the stage he probably wrote to be read; not to be read by single individuals, but to be read aloud by the possessor of the MS. to a circle of friends. This mode of publicity was the one adopted by the rhetorician Isocrates, who lived at the same time as Antiphanes, though he was somewhat older (B.C. 436–338) than the comedian. It was also adopted by another contemporary, the tragedian Chæremon, who was the author of the practice of composing tragedies which were meant solely to be read in this manner.[2] This practice, which thus was becoming so common in the period between the Peloponnesian war and the battle of Chæronea, is interesting as being the transition stage through which the Greeks passed from being a nation which received its literature through its ears to becoming a nation of readers.[3] The evidence afforded by the fragments of Antiphanes accords with the verdict of antiquity,

[1] Ath. vi. 223F.

[2] Writers of such tragedies were called *ἀναγνωστικοί*.

[3] The comedies of Antiphanes were probably recited at banquets, as those of Menander seem to have been afterwards, *ἐκ τούτου . . . Μενάνδρῳ . . . τὰ συμπόσια χώραν ἔδωκεν*, Plut. Mor. 818: *ὁ δὲ Μένανδρος μετὰ χαρίτων μάλιστα ἑαυτὸν αὐτάρκη παρέσχηκεν, ἐν θεάτροις, ἐν διατριβαῖς, ἐν συμποσίοις, ἀνάγνωσμα καὶ μάθημα καὶ ἀγώνισμα καινότατον ὃν ἡ Ἑλλὰς ἐνήνοχε καλῶν παρέχων τὴν ποίησιν*, ib. 1040. So, too, p. 867 and *De Vit. Pud.* xvi.

that Antiphanes was a graceful and perspicuous writer. The subjects of his plays, so far as they are indicated by the titles, were the ordinary subjects of Middle Comedy. The number of burlesques on mythology was considerable among his plays, *e.g.* the *Adonis*, *Deucalion*, *Omphale*, *Orpheus*, &c. Parodies of the tragedians were also numerous, to judge from the titles, *e.g.* the *Alcestis*, *Bacchus*, *Medea*, *Philoctetes*, *Athamas*, &c. The fragments, again, contain allusions to and parodies on Euripides[1] and Sophocles.[2] The titles of some plays also indicate clearly that they contained literary criticism, *e.g.* *Poetry*, *Sappho*,[3] &c. From the *Poetry* there survives a fragment[4] of considerable interest for the history of the drama, in which Antiphanes complains that whereas the tragedian takes for the subject of his plays myths known to all the audience, and consequently has not to go to the trouble of explaining the situation at the beginning of his play, or of narrating the antecedents of his characters, the hard-worked comedian has to rely for everything on his own powers of invention and of conveying the necessary information to his audience. Another feature of the Middle Comedy, inherited from the Old, and distinguishing it from the New, which occurs in the plays of Antiphanes, is the ridicule of philosophy. Plato and his school come in for the satire which was levelled by the Old Comedy at Socrates. Externals still catch the comedian's attention; but it is the neatness, no longer the negligence, of philosophers' attire which furnishes matter for jest—a fact which harmonises with the stories told of the greatest of Plato's pupils, Aristotle, to the effect that he was foppish in dress, and carried his "fads" so far as to cause it to be understood that he expected people who dined with him to come washed. Thus Antiphanes describes an old gentleman wearing a white mantle, beautiful brown tunic, soft cap, elegantly balanced cane—in fine, the Academy in person. It is not, however, solely the philosopher's attire which is made fun of; his philosophy also is satirised.

Other points in which Antiphanes shows the common stamp of the Middle Comedy are that he has some mild political allusions; that he is sarcastic on the matter of marriage, *e.g.* "He is married. *B.* What! married! and I left him walking about alive;" he is sarcastic also on women in general: you may as well, he says, proclaim a secret by the town-crier as tell it to

[1] *E.g.* *Traumatias* 1 (Mein. F. C. M. 120).
[2] *E.g.* *Antig.* 712 is parodied *Incert.* 10.
[3] And the Τραγωιστής.
[4] F. C. M. 105.

a woman. The practice of asking riddles, which is ridiculed frequently in Middle Comedy, is also illustrated in Antiphanes. The Parasite is drawn in some of the fragments that remain to us with much care; he requires no more invitation to dinner than does a fly, and it is as hard to get him away as to get him out of a well; resentment he cannot feel; his amiability is inexhaustible, his appreciation for your jokes unlimited; he wishes his friends nothing but prosperity. The Parasite's own view of the matter is that he renders innumerable services to his friends, is a regular earthquake at forcing doors, a thunderbolt in fight, a slip-knot for strangling inconvenient people, and ready with his sworn testimony on any matter for the service of his friend. True, some people laugh at him; but they are only young men, and he has the consciousness of his own good services. What life is so happy as his, whose most arduous occupation is to smile, to joke, and drink deep? The Parasite himself, at any rate, ranks it next to being wealthy. To dine well without having to think of the bill is the life of the gods.

Although Antiphanes resembles the other comedians of his time in his philosophy of life, and advises men, being mortal, to limit themselves to things mortal; and although he holds that if you take away the pleasures from life there is nothing left except to die, still this is outweighed (at any rate in the fragments we possess) by his moral aphorisms; *e.g.* base gains bring little pleasure and much pain; the consciousness of a just life is the best of pleasures; since man must die, it is folly to die for nothing; adorn not your body with bright colours, but your heart with clean works; honourable poverty is better than base wealth. Antiphanes' humour peeps out in the fragment in which he says that it is not on the perjurer, but on the man who trusts him that divine vengeance descends. He was a man of the world, as is shown by his maxim that one should do at Sparta as Sparta does; and he anticipated the expression that the dead are not dead but "gone before." Finally, we may notice that in some respects Antiphanes foreshadows the New Comedy, and thus gives additional proof that the Middle Comedy was but a transition stage; for the titles of some of his comedies seem to show that their plots were of the more developed kind which were characteristic of the New Comedy. Such are the *Marriage*, the *Twins*, the *Unfortunate Lovers*, the *Heiress*, the *Lost Money*, &c.[1]

The next poet of the Middle Comedy of whom we possess

[1] Add, amongst others, the Ἀναψῳδόμενος, which was performed in B.C. 356, according to the Didascalia preserved to us in a stone record. *C. I. G.* i. 354.

any considerable fragments is Anaxandrides; and as Aristotle several times quotes him, it is probable that he was a comedian of some merit. Anaxandrides, too, like Alexis and Antiphanes, was not by birth an Athenian. He seems to have commenced his career as a comedian about B.C. 376, and to have continued until about B.C. 345 or B.C. 340. He did write dithyrambs, but was best known as a comedian. Of his thirty-six comedies whose titles we are acquainted with, one-third were mythological burlesques; and in respect of his subjects, literature, philosophy, hetaeræ, &c., he seems to have been in accord with the other poets of the Middle Comedy. Suidas says that he was the first comedian to introduce love plots, but the author of the Greek life of Aristophanes says that it was Aristophanes who first introduced them in the lost play *Cocalus*. Although in Anaxandrides we find the usual attacks on marriage, we also find him opposed to divorce. But perhaps the two most remarkable fragments are that in which he declares his agnosticism,[1] and that in which he insists on the relativity of religions.[2] Thus the Egyptians worship cows, the Greeks eat them; the former adore dogs, the latter thrash them; and a similar variation of the religious sentiment is to be observed in the treatment by the two peoples of cats.

In Eubulus at last we come to a comedian of Athenian birth. According to Suidas, he lived about B.C. 376, but his life must have been prolonged for some time later, as he was contemporary with Demosthenes and Hyperides. We possess fragments and the titles of about fifty comedies; and from these it would seem that Eubulus particularly affected mythological burlesque. Allied with this is a fondness for parodying the tragedians, particularly Euripides, and, with more justice, Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, whose tragedies seem to have been bad. In diction, Eubulus, from his fragments, appears to have been terse and elegant.

Of the other thirty poets of the Middle Comedy we have not space to speak in detail. What remains of Amphis makes us regret the loss of his plays. He had discovered that the best solace for misfortune is work; that one dislikes the scenes of one's misfortunes; that solitude is golden; that silence is invaluable, and that death is everlasting. A still greater loss is that of the plays of Timocles, who seems to have possessed an excel-

[1] The *Canephoros* (F. C. M. 171):—

ἅπαντες ἐσμὲν πρὸς τὰ θεῖ' ἀβέλτεροι
κοὐκ ἐσμὲν οὐδέν.

[2] The *Poleis* (F. C. M. 181).

lent style, considerable power, and much audacity. Several of his fragments contain political allusions, and in them he shows that he belonged to the Macedonian party; for in the *Delos*, where he alludes to the Harpalus affair, he not only, in accordance with the general suspicion of the time, accuses Demosthenes of having been bribed by Harpalus, but also makes the same charge against Hyperides. Elsewhere also he attacks these, the most prominent orators of the anti-Macedonian party. We also have an interesting fragment of nineteen lines by Timocles expounding the theory of tragedy, to the effect that men find consolation for their own misfortunes in seeing represented the greater misfortunes which the heroes of tragedy bear. Ephippus gives an amusing sketch of a foppish young follower of Plato, about to make a speech, and posed in a beautiful attitude, with one foot (toe on the ground, heel in the air) crossing the other ankle, displaying his carefully arranged straps and elegant sandals, mantle æsthetically draped, and himself majestically leaning on his cane. The followers of Plato also furnish the subject of a long fragment by Epicrates, who represents them as much exercised as to the definition of colocynth, whether it is animal, vegetable, or mineral; for, says Epicrates, they spent their time in defining things. In the fragments of Anaxilas we find a long diatribe against another class in Athenian society, the hetæræ; it is illuminating for the social sanction of the time to notice that Anaxilas does not complain that hetæræ are immoral, but that they are expensive. Elsewhere he complains that some people are as suspicious as snails, who carry their very houses about with them. Dionysios in a long fragment gives us an amusing picture of a cook, who treats his art with the respect which its importance in the time of the Middle Comedy entitled it to: it is above definition; any man may roast or boil, but to be a cook is another thing. This cook seems to have been an Aristotelian, for the Stagirite about this time was drawing exactly the same distinction; any man may do a just act, but to be a just man is a different thing. Aristophon draws a Parasite in a way which reminds us of the Parasite of Antiphanes; he is an Argive at ejecting drunken guests, a ram at breaking open doors, and he is so regular in appearing at dinner that he has earned the nickname "Soup."[1] Axionicus and Diodorus also draw the character of the Parasite, but do not add any fresh traits to the character. Theophilus

[1] ἂν τις ἑστιᾷ, πάρειμι πρῶτος, ὥστ' ἤδη πάλαι
. . . ζωμὸς καλοῦμαι.

calls music a great treasure;[1] and Mnesimachus has a beautiful comparison of sleep to death, for which there is no English equivalent.[2] The other poets of whose plays we have fragments and titles do not call for special mention. They are: Araros and Nicostratus, sons of Aristophanes; Antidotus, Cratinus (the younger), Dromo, Epigenes, Eriphus, Eubulides, Heniochus, Heraclides, Heraclitus, Orphelio, Philetærus, Philiscus, Sophilus, Sotades, Timotheus, and Xenarchus.

[1] In the *Citharœdus* (F. C. M. 628):—

μέγας θησαυρός ἐστι καὶ βέβαιος μουσική.

[2] *Incert* (F. C. M. 579):—

Ὕπνος τὸ μικρὸν τοῦ θανάτου μυστήριον.





Part II.

HISTORY, ORATORY, AND PHILOSOPHY.



BOOK I.

HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNINGS OF PROSE.

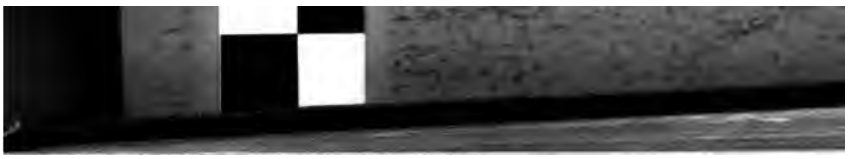
POETRY precedes prose composition generally in the history of a nation's literature, partly because poetry can be more easily composed and transmitted without the aid of writing than can prose, and partly because the charm of verse or rhythm appeals more powerfully and more directly than that of prose. Further, prose requires that the means of writing should be developed to a certain extent; and in the case of the Greeks, we must add that a reading public only came into existence late and gradually. The Greek lived more in the open air than in his own house; transacted business, private and political, orally more than by means of writing; and, by the constitution of the society he lived in, listened to rather than read his literature. The Greek aversion to the solitary and unsociable mode of acquiring information by reading is illustrated in the *Phædrus* of Plato,[1] where Socrates says of written works: "You would imagine that they had intelligence; but if you want to know anything and put a question to one of them, the speaker always gives one unvarying answer. And when they have been once written down, they are tumbled about anywhere, among those who do, and among those who do not understand them. And they have no reticences or proprieties towards different classes of persons; and, if they are unjustly assailed or abused, their parent is needed to protect his offspring, for they cannot protect or defend themselves."

This passage shows that people did read books in Plato's time; but in the sixth century B.C., when prose literature begins to make its appearance for the first time in Greece, there was no

[1] 275 (Jowett's translation).

reading public, and prose authors composed their works rather to be delivered as lectures than to be circulated as books. Writing at the time seems to have been developed enough to aid composition, but not enough to diffuse literature. As was to be expected in a new art, the art of composing prose was one which only gradually attained freedom and grace. Indeed, the very idea of prose literary composition was one which only occurred to the Greek mind when poetry had made several unsuccessful attempts to narrate history and expound philosophy—two functions which do not properly belong to poetry. Laws and treaties between states had, doubtless, been expressed in prose and inscribed on stone or metal before the sixth century, but they are no more literature than are the lists of Olympian victors, which also existed probably before the sixth century. If, then, setting aside laws, treaties, lists of officials, &c., as not belonging to our subject, we turn to the earliest prose literature of Greece, we find that history and philosophy are the two subjects which, having been developed in poetry, at least as far as was compatible with the laws of poetry, were the first to burst the bonds of rhythm and find expression in prose.

Prose, like other forms of Greek literature, although carried to its highest pitch in the mother-land, originated in the colonies; and it is to Miletus especially that the honour of inventing prose belongs. The earliest prose writers, Hecatæus, Pherecydes the historian, Dionysius, Anaximander, and Anaximenes, were either born in Miletus, or, like Bion, Deiochus, and Charon, in colonies founded by Miletus. Pherecydes of Syros, who disputes with Cadmus of Miletus the honour of being the first Greek prose writer, did not indeed belong to Miletus, but to the colonies. The very existence of Cadmus has, however, been disputed. According to the ordinary account, he lived about B.C. 550 and wrote an account of the Foundation or Colonisation of Miletus, which, according to Suidas, consisted of four books. It seems, however, extremely improbable that the works which in the time of Augustus went under the name of Cadmus were genuine; and although there may have been a writer named Cadmus who lived in the middle of the sixth century B.C., it must be said that he is not even mentioned by any classical writer, or, indeed, by any author before Strabo. The existence, on the other hand, of a genuine work by Pherecydes of Syros *On Nature* seems to be generally accepted; but the evidence as to his date is conflicting, and it is only conjecturally that he is placed in the middle of the



sixth century B.C, though the conjecture is confirmed by both the language and the style of the few fragments which have come down to us. The language is Old Ionic, and the style has the "jerkiness" and abruptness characteristic of the earliest attempts to write prose. It is in favour of the antiquity of Pherecydes and the genuineness of the fragments that he is mentioned by Aristotle.[1] From Pherecydes of Syros who wrote a poem *On Nature* it is necessary to distinguish Pherecydes of Leros, who lived about the time of the Persian wars, and wrote on the Antiquities of Attica in ten books, beginning with the beginning of the world and coming down to the Ionic colonisation of Asia Minor. With regard to Bion of Proconnesus, another early prose writer, who wrote on the early history of Ionia, it is uncertain at what period he lived. He is said to have been contemporary with Pherecydes, but with which Pherecydes is doubtful. Acusilaus of Argos is said to have lived shortly after Cadmus; but, like Cadmus, his existence lacks the satisfactory support of a mention in classical writers, and we cannot, therefore, feel any great confidence in what is told us about him. He is said to have composed a genealogical work, which began with Chaos and came down to the Trojan war, and which resembled in everything but metre the genealogical poems of the Hesiodic school. Even in the time of Hadrian this work existed, but, as in the case of the works of Cadmus, it seems more probable that we have to do with a forgery than with a genuine work. The very nature of the work is inconsistent with the idea involved in the term "logographer," which is applied to the early prose writers who paved the way for history, when it at length appeared in the work of Herodotus. By the name "logographer" is meant a person who collects and commits to writing facts, in contradistinction to one who collects myths; whereas, if the work which went in Hadrian's time under the name of Acusilaus were genuine, Acusilaus would merely have paraphrased in prose the myths of Hesiod. Before proceeding to those logographers of whom we know something, we will briefly mention those of whom we know little but their names. Deiochus of Proconnesus is said to have written an account of the city of Cyzicus. Hippys of Rhegium lived in the time of the Persian wars, and wrote an account of Argos. Eugeon of Samos, Eudemus of Paros (or Naxos), Democles, Melesagoras, Xenomedes of Chios, and Damastes, are little more than names to us.

The most distinguished of the logographers was Hecataeus of

[1] Μετάφρ. Ν. Η. 1091 a 9.

Miletus, a man who figures in the history of his country as well as in the history of literature, and for whom we conceive a distinct admiration. The date of his birth and death there is nothing to fix, but the time at which he flourished fortunately admits of no doubt. Herodotus not only frequently refers to him and quotes from him, but gives us valuable information about his life. In the time of the Ionic revolt, Hecatæus was a man of position, influence, and character. He was among the leading men whom Aristagoras consulted when about to instigate Ionia to revolt, and he showed his insight and his comprehension of the enormous power of the Persian empire by endeavouring to dissuade his countrymen from attempting to match themselves against their powerful masters. This was from no sympathy with the Persians, from no want of patriotism or of love of freedom, on the part of Hecatæus, but because he, with a cool head and with the knowledge he had acquired of the resources of the Persian empire, foresaw the hopelessness of the struggle. The revolt once decided on, Hecatæus showed the same cool perception of the advantages possessed by the Ionians, and advised them, if they undertook the struggle, to employ every means to bring it to a successful issue. The treasures of the great Apollo temples at Branchidæ would fall into the hands of the Persians if left alone, and he therefore advised the Ionians to employ these temple treasures for the purposes of the revolt rather than leave them to be used by the enemy. This advice, however, shared the same fate as his previous proposal. A third time Hecatæus showed his practical wisdom, and a third time his advice was rejected, when, just before the battle of Lade, he proposed that the inhabitants of Miletus should leave their city, withdraw to the island of Leros, and there, awaiting the issue of events, watch for a favourable moment for establishing themselves firmly once more in Miletus.

Hecatæus was a man of good birth; he traced his descent to a god, and must have been possessed of some wealth to make the extensive travels, the fruits of which he embodied in his *Description of the World*. This work consisted apparently of two parts, one describing Europe, the other Asia—the latter including Egypt and Libya. There are several points of interest in connection with this work. In the first place, we find that in it geography is hardly yet distinguished from history. The plan of the work is indeed topographical, but the description of the places mentioned in it included a history of the places as well. In the next place, it has been maintained, both in ancient and in recent times, that Herodotus not only quotes from this

work with acknowledgment, but has also "stolen" passages from his predecessor's *Description of the World*, and tried to pass them off as his own. Of this point, as far as it affects the character of Herodotus, we shall have to speak subsequently. In this place we have to consider the question only so far as it may throw light on the authenticity of the works ascribed to Hecatæus.

Whether Hecatæus gave names to the two parts of his work, or even gave a title to the whole work, may, perhaps, be doubted.[1] It may, however, be regarded as a certain inference from the quotations in Herodotus that he did write a description of places in Europe and Asia. In Alexandrine times and later, there was in circulation a *Description of the World* professing to be by Hecatæus, and divided into two parts—a Description of Europe and a Description of Asia. But Eratosthenes (born B.C. 276) seems to have had great doubt whether the latter part was genuine. Instances of literary forgery we have already seen, in all probability, in the works which passed under the names of Cadmus and Acusilaus; and it seems probable that here too we have the work of a forger, who, knowing that Hecatæus had written a description of Asia which had perished, proceeded to reconstruct the work, and in doing so borrowed many passages, almost verbatim, from Herodotus' description of Egypt.[2] Then, in later times, there arose among uncritical and not impartial men the belief that, since Herodotus was later in date than Hecatæus, these passages must have been stolen by the later from the earlier writer. Whether the *Description of Europe*, the first part of the work, was accepted as genuine by the critics of Alexandria, we do not know. We have no expression of their opinion for or against it. But the spuriousness of the one part throws suspicion on the other. Finally, a work entitled the *Genealogies*, which was in circulation until late times, was ascribed to Hecatæus. But the mythical character of the work is not much in accord with what little we know of Hecatæus' writings; and frequently, as

[1] Herodotus does not quote the work by name. He says, *e.g.* vi. 137, Ἑκαταῖος μὲν ὁ Ἡγησάνδρου ἔφησε ἐν τοῖσι λόγοισι κ.τ.λ.

[2] If this be the case, then the qualities usually ascribed to the style and language of Hecatæus on the authority of Hermogenes—that it was purer Ionic than Herodotus, sweet, but less sweet than Herodotus—can no longer be predicated of it; for Hermogenes was speaking with reference to the forgery, as is shown by the words with which he begins his criticism, *De Gen. Dicendi*, ii. 12, Ἑκαταῖος δὲ ὁ Μιλήσιος, παρ' οὗ δὴ μάλιστα ὠφέληται ὁ Ἡρόδοτος, although the debt of Herodotus is by some taken to mean indebtedness in style, not in matter.

Herodotus refers to him, he never cites him in such a way as to countenance the belief that he wrote more than one work.

Contemporary with Hecatæus seems to have been Dionysius of Miletus, who wrote probably a *Persian History*, and Charon of Lampsacus, who seems to have been nothing more than an annalist. A man of far different powers was Hellanicus of Mitylene, who wrote numerous prose works of various kinds. His date cannot be fixed precisely, but he was a contemporary of Herodotus, and lived long enough to bring his History of Attica down to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, as we learn from Thucydides (i. 97). His works may be divided into three classes—genealogical, topographical, and chronological. The genealogical works included the *Deucalioneia*, which, following the Thessalian myth, began with Deucalion after the flood, and probably dealt with Thessalian traditions; and the *Troica*, which not only related many new facts about the Trojan war, but followed the history of the Trojan colonies founded after the fall of Troy. The topographical works included much history, as well as the description of places; for instance, the *Atthis*, or *History of Attica*, included a sketch of Attic history from the time of Cecrops to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war. The *Persica* comprised a history not only of the Persians, but also of the Medes and Assyrians from the time of Ninus to the time of Hellanicus. The *Æolica* or *Lesbica* also probably included the history as well as a description of Lesbos. The chronological works or annals, the *Priestesses of the Argive Hera* and the *Carneonicæ*, were based on official lists, in the one case of the priestesses, in the other of the winners at the Carnean games; but they were something more than bare lists. It is probable that even the official lists comprised something more than mere names, and that important events were also briefly noted down. Hellanicus, again, may have collected together and synchronised information drawn from various data; for there was at this time no mode of reckoning the years common to all the Greeks.

Finally, among the logographers earlier than or contemporary with Herodotus, we must mention Xanthus of Lydia, who composed an account of his native country. It is doubtful whether he wrote before Herodotus or not. Ephorus, a later historian, however, affirms that the work of Herodotus was indebted to Xanthus, and the authority for making Xanthus later than Herodotus is not strong enough to outweigh the evidence of Ephorus. Before leaving the logographers, we may say, on the authority of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, which is confirmed by

the fragments that we possess and by knowledge derived from other sources, that the logographers bore a close likeness to each other both in their methods and in their style. Their object was to give publicity to traditions which had only an oral currency, and to the events of the past recorded in the lists and other documents preserved in temples or other public places. In the arrangement of the material which they collected they showed no skill. They simply heaped together all the information they could get, and classed it solely by the nation or town to which it related. As poetry is fitted for works of the imagination, so is prose for precision; and although the logographers had little or no notion of historical criticism, their intention was to collect facts, as their name implies, not myths. Finally, as regards their style, it was clear, simple, correct, brief, and free from rhetorical decoration. The earliest of them evidently find prose a difficult instrument to handle. They eject short sentences with a sharp effort. The movement of their writing is jerky. Their vocabulary and metaphors are those of poetry rather than of prose; and periods which even in Homer have attained a certain development and complexity are unknown in the earliest prose.

Contemporary with, but junior to, Herodotus was the celebrated physician Hippocrates. He was born between B.C. 470 and B.C. 460 in the island of Cos, and belonged to the family of the Asclepiadæ, who traced their origin to the fabulous Æsculapius. In his youth he became familiar with the theory and practice of medicine by his connection with the Asclepion of Cos, and he was specially instructed by Herodicus, who first introduced the use of gymnastics as a part of medicine. He then made extensive travels, as may be inferred from his works. In what order he visited the places which he mentions, we cannot say; but he seems to have been acquainted with Delos, Thasos, Abdera, and other places in Thrace and Thessaly. In Athens he must have spent much time, and although there is no satisfactory evidence for the story that he rendered important services during the great plague which broke out at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the story. Macedonia it seems probable he visited, for he describes Pella and Acanthus; and we know that his son became court-physician to Archelaus, king of Macedonia. It is also said that he declined an invitation to attend the king of Persia. Neither has this story any improbability in itself, for before the time of Hippocrates a Greek physician, Democedes, had been attached to the Persian court, and in Hippocrates' own time his relation

Ctesias was the Persian court-physician. But there is no good evidence for the story. Hippocrates died at Larissa some time between B.C. 380 and B.C. 360, at an advanced age.

The works of Hippocrates are the earliest treatises on medicine known to us in Greek, but they are in themselves proof that the art must have been cultivated in Greece long before his time. Considerable as the genius of "the great Hippocrates" undoubtedly is, and vast as was his own observation, he was to some extent indebted to his predecessors. But the amount and nature of the debt are hard to determine. The Asclepia, or temples of Æsculapius, which were established in various parts of Greece, corresponded in many respects to the hospitals of the present day. Patients went there to be treated, and there physicians acquired practical knowledge and skill. In many points the treatment usual in the Asclepia was far from scientific, but the facts that they were usually situated near thermal springs, that attention was paid to diet, that the imagination of the patient was worked upon, help us to understand the character of the treatment pursued. On the other hand, though the art was cultivated, the science was not neglected. The physicians carefully noted down the symptoms presented by the patient when first brought, and then with equal care noted the course of the disease and the results consequent upon the exhibition of various kinds of medicine.

Hippocrates shows his greatness in the way in which he rejects what was unsound in the medical methods of his day, and carries forward all that was scientific. Viewing him, therefore, in connection with the medicine of his time, we have to notice first his break with it, next his connection with it. With all quackery, with "amulets and complicated machines to impose on the credulity of the ignorant multitude,"[1] he broke once and for all. At the same time, his early practice in the hospital of Cos saved him from indulging in the useless speculations and quasi-philosophical theories of medicine, which were popular among the intellectual men of the day, and must have been particularly seductive to a man of the mental power of Hippocrates. While he thus broke with the errors of the multitude on the one hand, and of the cultivated on the other, Hippocrates adhered to and developed the scientific tendencies present in Greek medicines. As we have said, the course of diseases was studied carefully in the Asclepia of Greece; this implies patient observation, and results in considerable skill in prognosis. Now, it is in prognosis that Hippocrates excels,

[1] *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates*, i. 18.

while throughout his works the basis of all his investigations and conclusions is observation and experience. His theory of symptoms has been the marvel and the model of all succeeding generations of physicians; while his conspectus of the remoter causes of disease, *e.g.* atmosphere, seasons of the year, local conditions, &c., is a remarkable example of insight and accurate observation. It is sometimes said that in Greece speculation reigned to the exclusion of observation; but the works of Hippocrates are an everlasting proof to the contrary. Experiment, with all that it may be made to reveal, was unknown to the Greeks; nor had they the accumulated observations of thousands of years, which modern men of science possess, to work upon; but they were not lacking in the power of observation. The boldness and success of Hippocrates in surgical operations shows how fully he availed himself of the opportunities of observation afforded him by the frequent accidents in the national games of Greece; though in anatomy and general pathology he is now, of course, obsolete. But, much as Hippocrates trusts to experience, he is no mere empiric. He employed reason on the results of observation, and the first of his Aphorisms is justly famous. (It runs, "Life is short and the Art long; the occasion fleeting, experience fallacious, and judgment difficult.")[1]

The dialect in which Hippocrates wrote is Ionic. Prose had not yet been adopted by the Athenians as their own; but the Ionic of Hippocrates differs somewhat from that of Herodotus in the greater number of Atticisms which it includes. In style Hippocrates is compared by Dionysius to Thucydides; and in his desire to crowd as much thought into one sentence as possible, he is apt to become obscure. But his brevity is the terseness of a vigorous thinker, not the inadequacy resulting from poverty of ideas. The number of works which have come to be ascribed to him is great. The *Prognostics*, *First and Third Epidemics*, *On Regimen in Acute Diseases*, *On Airs, Waters, and Places*, *On Wounds of the Head*, and the *Aphorisms* are universally regarded as by Hippocrates. To give merely a list of the other treatises, of which some in all probability are by Hippocrates, would take more space than can be here afforded.

A commentary on the works of Hippocrates was written by a celebrated physician, Herophilus of Chalcedon in Bithynia, who flourished about B C. 300. This, however, has perished along with the other works of Herophilus.

[1] *Hippocrates*, ii. 697.

CHAPTER II.

HERODOTUS.

HALICARNASSUS, the birthplace of Herodotus, was situated on the south-west coast of Asia Minor, and was originally occupied by Carians. Dorian emigrants from Troezene[1] then settled there, and for some time the place belonged to a confederation consisting of six Dorian cities, but eventually was excluded or withdrew from the alliance.[2] Like the other Greek colonies on the coast of Asia Minor, Halicarnassus became subject first to the Lydian power,[3] and then, when Cyrus conquered the Lydian kingdom, to the Persian empire.[4] In pursuance of the policy which they employed elsewhere, the Persians did not directly govern Halicarnassus, but established or confirmed the rule of a native Tyrant, who was a vassal of the great king, and was responsible for the payment to the local satrap of a fixed tribute, and for raising troops when required. During the boyhood of Herodotus, Halicarnassus was ruled by a queen, Artemisia, who took, as Herodotus tells us[5] with evident pride, high position for her courage and sagacity in the counsels and esteem of Xerxes during the second Persian invasion.

The best evidence that we have of the date of Herodotus is afforded by the historian himself when he tells us[6] that he had a conversation with Thersander of Orchomenus, who had been present at a banquet given by Mardonius during the second Persian war, and to whom on that occasion a Persian had confided his presentiment—destined to be fulfilled—that shortly the Persian host would be destroyed, and but few would survive. This is good though indefinite evidence. It shows that Herodotus was not old enough to tell the tale of the Persian wars from his own experience, but yet was old enough to meet people who had taken part in them. Thus, although we cannot regard Pamphila's[7] statement, which would make Herodotus to have been born B.C. 484, as anything more than a conjecture, we may take it as approximately correct, for the supposition that he was born some time between the first and the second Persian wars (*i.e.* between B.C. 490 and 480) accords with tradition, and with what little we know of his life.

[1] *Herodotus*, vii. 99. [2] i. 144. [3] i. 28. [4] i. 174.
[5] vii. 99. [6] ix. 16.
[7] Pamphila was an authoress of the time of Nero. The passage in question is preserved in Aulus Gellius, *N. A.* xv. 23.

According to Suidas,[1] Herodotus belonged to a good Halicarnassian family. His most distinguished relative was Panyasis, a literary man, who must be supposed to have exercised some influence on his literary and mental development. Herodotus was doubtless by nature inclined to put much belief in omens, portents, and prodigies of all kinds; and an acquaintance with the epic poets was part of the education of his time; but it could not have been wholly without effect upon Herodotus that Panyasis applied the method of observation to portents, &c., and obtained some distinction as an epic writer. We know, further, that Panyasis wrote a poem on the adventures of Heracles, a Heracleiad; and Herodotus himself took so much interest in the myths connected with Heracles, that he voyaged to Tyre solely in order to investigate one of them. Finally, we find that Herodotus' taste for the antiquities of history, and probably to some extent his knowledge of the subject, were forestalled in a work by Panyasis on the colonisation of Ionia.

Of the life of Herodotus, all that we know practically is, that he undertook extensive travels over all the world then known. The result of these travels was the History of Herodotus which we now possess, divided by the grammarians of Alexandria into nine books, named after the nine Muses. Whether Herodotus from the beginning of his explorations entertained the design of writing the history of the long struggle between the Greeks and the barbarians which resulted in the Persian wars, there is no direct evidence to show. There is, however, nothing improbable in making the assumption, and the whole tone of the work is much more in harmony with the feelings which animated Hellas in the time of Herodotus' youth, than with those which were rife when, in his declining years, he was reducing to form at Thurii the materials which he had laboriously collected. The history of Herodotus is throughout national. It is the story, not of the struggle and success of some one Greek state, but of *all* the Hellenes against the barbarians; and this sentiment belongs to the time of the Persian wars and the time which immediately succeeded them—the period of Herodotus' youth—rather than to the time when the feeling of national unity had yielded before the divisions produced by the great struggle between Athens and Sparta in the Peloponnesian

[1] Suidas, whose date is unknown, but is generally put down about A.D. 1000, composed a lexicon in which he draws on a variety of older works of scholiasts, grammarians, lexicographers. He was an uncritical writer, and it is hard to distinguish the good from the bad in him, inasmuch as his sources sometimes are, and sometimes are not, trustworthy.

war. Further, the defeat of the barbarians is treated of by Herodotus as an historical verification of the religious theory that no mortal power can become exceeding great without incurring the disfavour of the gods, and eventually meeting destruction from them. This sentiment, again, is one which was much more dominant in the early than the late years of Herodotus, and was likely to influence his conception of his History from the time when he first thought of writing it, and not to have grown up during the writing of it. Finally, the history of his own native place, which, as we have already seen, went through every phase of the national conflict with the barbarian, was the thread round which all his later knowledge crystallised, and naturally determined the way in which he would regard the Persian wars, *i.e.* as the result of a long series of collisions between the Greek and the barbarian worlds. In other words, the view which Herodotus takes is that of the Greeks who lived on the eastern side of the Ægæan. This view he learned in his youth before he left Halicarnassus, not when he settled in Thurii; and it was this view which determined the information he would collect, not the information which he collected that determined his point of view.

Herodotus begins his History by declaring that his purpose is to tell the causes of the wars between the Greeks and the barbarians. The wrongs and reprisals on both sides, which belong to the domain of myth, he sets aside without giving an opinion on them; he prefers to begin with what he knows, and the first thing he can vouch for is, that Crœsus, the king of Lydia, attacked and subjugated the Greek cities on the coast of Asia Minor. This leads him to give a history of the Lydian kings—including the wonderful story of Gyges and his magical ring, and the famous interview of Solon with Crœsus—and a description of the country of Lydia and its most noteworthy sights. The wrong Crœsus did to the Asiatic Greeks and the excessive wealth which he acquired brought down on him the wrath of Heaven, and he was overthrown by the Persian Cyrus. Then follows an account of the Medes and their history to the time of Astyages, of the birth and exposure of his grandson Cyrus, and of the way in which Cyrus at the head of the Persians overthrew the Median kingdom. We are thus brought into the domain of Persian history, and the growth of the Persian kingdom until it collided with Greece is the main subject of the first six books of Herodotus. He describes the customs of the Persians, their conquest under Cyrus of the Asiatic Greeks, of Babylon, and of the Massagetæ—in each case giving a descrip-



tion of the country and an account of the history of the conquered people. Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses, who undertook the invasion of Egypt, and this gives Herodotus an opportunity for introducing his wonderful description of the land of Egypt, of the strange customs of its peoples, of its marvellous history and its astounding monuments. This fills the whole of the Second book, which is to us, as it was to the Greeks, the most enthralling of all the nine books.

In the Third book, he returns to the invasion of Egypt and its conquest by Cambyses. The death of Cambyses was followed by the appearance of a pretender to the throne, the pseudo-Smerdis. Herodotus relates his dethronement and the trick by which Darius contrived to obtain the crown for himself. At this point Herodotus introduces the history of the celebrated tyrant of Samos, Polycrates; the tale of his unsuccessful attempt to avert the Nemesis of the gods which his over-great prosperity was doomed to bring upon his head, and his fall. Darius organised the government of the now vast kingdom of Persia with a broad statesmanship and minute attention to detail which stamp him as the greatest of the Persian monarchs; and the review of the Persian kingdom and its resources thus introduced serves to impress the reader with the magnitude of the danger threatening Greece, and to heighten the interest of Herodotus' tale.

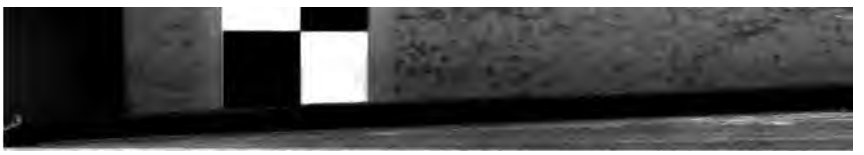
The Fourth book is occupied by Darius' attempt against the Scyths, which was unsuccessful, and by an account of their country and the countries bordering on it. The history of Cyrene is also introduced in this book, on the ground, which we may doubt, that Darius meditated an invasion in this direction also. But the plea serves as an excuse for the development of all the information about the tribes on the north coast of Africa between Cyrene and Egypt, which Herodotus had picked up from the traders along that coast. The invasion of Scythia, though unsuccessful, and all but the destruction of Darius and his army, paved the way for the invasion of Greece under Xerxes, inasmuch as it incidentally resulted in the conquest of the south of Thrace, through which Xerxes' army eventually marched. Accordingly the Fifth book opens with a description of Thrace; and then we come to the proximate causes of the first Persian invasion of Greece.

Histiæus, the tyrant of Miletus, who had once saved Darius, but was regarded by that monarch as too clever to be allowed entire liberty, was nominally a guest, and really an honoured prisoner at the Persian court. Growing weary of this, he secretly instigated the Ionian cities to revolt, in order that he might be

sent to quell the insurrection and thus gain his liberty. In this revolt the Ionians were supported by the Athenians, but not by the Spartans, to whom they first applied for help. The revolt failed, and the attention of Darius was drawn to the necessity of crushing Greece. The first expedition which he sent for this purpose failed, and the second resulted in the glorious Athenian victory at Marathon, a victory which owes not a little of its immortal fame to the History of Herodotus. This closes the Sixth book.

The Seventh book opens with the preparations of Darius to take condign vengeance on Athens, and the opportune revolt of Egypt, which, by delaying the invasion of Greece until the death of Darius, left it in the hands of his unworthy successor, Xerxes, and thus probably saved Greece. The inception of the second Persian war is conceived by Herodotus in an epic spirit. Xerxes is loth to undertake the invasion of Greece, but the time is come for the wrath of the gods, provoked by the overweening greatness of the Persians, to descend upon this mighty empire, and false dreams are sent to Xerxes to drive him on destruction. War once resolved on, preparations of astounding magnitude were made. Magazines were prepared along the route in advance, and the neighbouring peoples engaged for months in filling them with stores. A canal was driven through Athos, that the fleet might escape the dangerous necessity of rounding this dangerous point. Bridges were built across the Hellespont, and all the many nations comprised in the Persian empire called upon to furnish contingents of troops. The dress and arms of all these peoples are described in the pages of Herodotus, and the advance of this army, numbering, according to Herodotus, over five millions altogether, and probably the greatest the world has ever seen, traced from Sardis on. This prepares the reader to realise the dismay of the Greeks, the despair of their very oracles, which Herodotus pictures, and the valour of the handful of Greeks who, under Leonidas, waited for death and glory at Thermopylæ. The main incidents of the Eighth book are the battle of Salamis and the flight of Xerxes, as are the battle of Platæa and the flight of the Persian army of the Ninth book.

Herodotus is such simple and delightful reading, he is so unaffected and entertaining, his story flows so naturally and with such ease, that we have a difficulty in bearing in mind that, over and above the hard writing which goes to make easy reading, there is a perpetual marvel in the work of Herodotus. It is the first artistic work in prose that Greek literature pro-



duced. This prose work, which for pure literary merit no subsequent work has surpassed, than which later generations, after using the pen for centuries, have produced no prose more easy or more readable, this was the first of histories and of literary prose.

Without attempting to analyse the literary merit of Herodotus, it will be enough here to point out one or two of its constituent elements, a comprehension of which will throw light on the development of Greek literature and the position of Herodotus in that development. In the contemplation of any work of art, after the first period of enjoyment, the thought usually travels with reverence to the artist—what manner of man was he to whom it was granted to conceive and execute this? And whereas a picture or a statue conveys but little definite information about the artist as a man, and the imagination has to draw on its own stores for a likeness which may have but little resemblance to the original, it is the privilege of literature to convey information much more definite in kind and more extensive in range. The extent to which we thus become acquainted with the man through his writing may vary, from the marked and deliberate way in which Thucydides withdraws himself and his own views from the reader's gaze, to the delightful intimacy which in reading Charles Lamb we come to feel with the man. But even with Thucydides we come to be acquainted, for his very withdrawal from us gives us the man's character. Herodotus, however, belongs to the type, not of Thucydides, but of Charles Lamb. Even if the tale of how the Greeks fought well for liberty, and thus bequeathed to us the heritage of their art and literature, were not of interest to us, we still should read it for the sake of making the acquaintance of Herodotus, by listening to him as he tells the tale. Or again, if, forgetting the sack of Sardis, Herodotus says that the Athenians at Marathon were the first Greeks who dared to look the Persians in the face, or makes the total of Xerxes' army too great by a million, or some other conjectural sum, this lessens our affection for Herodotus as little as it lessens our admiration for the Greeks. They fought well, and he tells the tale well, and we are the better for the fight and for the tale. *Dulce et decorum est.* The charm of Herodotus is, then, that in him we are listening to one who has seen many cities and known many men, and is not writing a book, but telling in his fresh old age the brave deeds that were done in the days before him, and describing the marvels of the strange lands which in his youth he had himself seen.

That Herodotus' narrative has the characteristics of a tale told rather than of a book written is no accident, nor is it to be explained solely by reference to the temper of the man. It is due to the fact that Herodotus wrote his work for oral delivery, and not for a reading public. The Greeks of his time were not in the habit of perusing literature, each man in the privacy of his own home. Epic poetry they were accustomed to hear recited in public. Lyric poetry they became acquainted with either by hearing choruses perform it at some sacred festival, or—as in the case of triumphal odes—on some public occasion, or by listening to some friend reciting an ode of Alcæus or Theognis after a banquet. Dramatic literature reached the Greek not in the form of books, but by being performed before him on the stage. A reading public can scarcely be said to have existed at this time; for although some public libraries were to be found, Euripides was the first private man who possessed a library. It was not, therefore, by spreading written copies of his work that an author could hope to gain much publicity. The prose writer at first naturally adopted the same means as the poet for bringing his work before the notice of the public; that is, he sought for some opportunity when large numbers of his fellow-countrymen were gathered together, and he would be able to read to them his productions.[1] Such an opportunity was found in such a festival as the Panathenæa at Athens, or the national games of Greece. At the latter we know prose works were regularly read, and special provision made for their recitation. This, then, was the way in which Herodotus had to gain the ear of the public. The idea is so alien to the notions of the present day, with its printing-press, that at first we are inclined to doubt the possibility of any considerable portion of a prose work—to say nothing of the whole of Herodotus—being thus recited. But when we reflect that a speech such as that of Demosthenes *On the Crown*, or that *On the Embassy*, is longer than the longest book of Herodotus, and that the Greeks (like the Japanese of the present day) were accustomed to listen for a whole day to the performance of play after play, we shall have little difficulty in believing that Herodotus might easily read at a sitting, say, the whole of the Second book, describing the land, the manners and customs, and the history of Egypt. More than this we are not called upon to believe, for what evidence there is on the point seems to indicate that these reci-

[1] It is to this practice that such expressions refer in Thucydides as i. 21, *ἐπὶ τὸ προσαγωγότερον τῇ ἀκροάσει*; i. 22, *καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ξύγκειται*; i. 2, *ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ξύγκειται*.

tations or lectures of Herodotus extended not to the whole, but only to parts of his work.

The well known story that Thucydides, as a boy, being present at one of these recitations, burst into tears, and that Herodotus thereupon declared the boy's nature was ripening towards learning, has the appearance of being an invention due to the desire of grammarians to bring the two great historians into connection with each other, and, further, is hard to believe because of the chronological difficulties. If we suppose that the recitation took place when Thucydides was fifteen years old, B.C. 456, Herodotus can scarcely have been thirty years of age then, had probably not yet visited Egypt, and could hardly have composed any of his work. But although we may reject this story, there is no reason to doubt that Lucian[1] is right in saying that Herodotus gave recitations at the Olympia, in Athens, Corinth, Argos, and Sparta. As far as Athens is concerned, the testimony of Lucian is amply confirmed by Eusebius,[2] and by the author of the attack on Herodotus (*De Malignitate Herodoti*) which goes under the name of Plutarch. The latter (c. 26) states that the Athenians decreed a gift of ten talents to Herodotus, and the former states that Herodotus was "honoured" by the Boulê of the Athenians for reciting his works to them. These statements may be regarded as referring to the same circumstance, and as proving a recitation at Athens at least.

Taking it as proved that Herodotus did give readings of his History, we shall see that the work is not complete, and that therefore his readings were probably of selections from, and not the whole of his history. In the first place, the last chapter of the last book was presumably not meant to conclude the work. It contains no indication that it is the last chapter, does not sum up the work, nor does it present anything corresponding to the introduction at the beginning of the history. In the next place, the History does not comprise the last phases of the struggle between the Greeks and the barbarians, the battles at the Eurymedon and Salamis in Cyprus.[3] It thus seems that

[1] Lucian flourished about A.D. 160, was a Syrian by birth, a lawyer by profession; was procurator of Egypt under Marcus Aurelius, and died under Commodus. He wrote, in Greek, a large number of amusing works. The passage to which reference is made in the text occurs in Lucian's *Herodotus* or *Aëtion*, a light and humorous appeal to the educated public of Macedonia to give Lucian's works a favourable reception.

[2] See *ante*, p. 69 n.

[3] But, on the other hand, it should be observed that Herodotus may have regarded the Persian wars as the consummation of the struggle between Greek and barbarian, and may have considered the repulse of the latter from Greece as the natural conclusion of the fight for liberty. In that case, tc

Herodotus must have contemplated continuing his work down to a later date than it reaches as we have it. If, in objection to this, it is alleged that the division of the work into nine books, named after the Muses, excludes the possibility of a tenth having been added, it is only necessary to point out that there is no evidence in the work itself of any such division. When Herodotus wishes in any passage to refer to some other passage, he does not refer to the number of the book, as Josephus, for instance, does, but says "in the former" or "the latter part of my History."[1] The first author who knows the division into books is Diodorus Siculus,[2] and the first who knows them by the names of the Muses is Lucian. From this we may infer that it was by the Alexandrine grammarians that the names of the Muses were given to the books.

Not only does Herodotus seem to have broken off without bringing his History down to its proper termination, but he also seems not to have finished that which he did write. Thus he promises[3] to say more about Ephialtes (who betrayed the Greeks at Thermopylæ) in a later part of the History, but never does say anything more. He also promises[4] to give an account of the capture of Nineveh by the Medes, but he never redeems his promise. Again,[5] he promises to say more about the Babylonian kings in his "Assyrian History," but we have no Assyrian history. Whether Herodotus ever wrote the Assyrian history which he promises, and whether, if he wrote it, he intended to publish it separately or as part of the work we have, are questions which do not seem to admit of being settled. Aristotle[6] alludes to an account of the siege of Nineveh—by Herodotus according to some MSS., by Hesiod according to most MSS. It is difficult to imagine how Hesiod could come to be writing of the siege of Nineveh, and this difficulty, together with the fact that Herodotus, as we have seen, certainly intended, at least, to give an account of the siege, incline us rather to think that Herodotus did write his Assyrian history.[7]

relate the operations of Cimon on the coast of Asia Minor would be an anti-climax, and, further, would have carried Herodotus into the period of internal dissension which led to the Peloponnesian war, and is as repugnant to the national feeling which predominates his work as it was lamentable to his pan-Hellenic mind.

[1] In v. 36 he refers to i. 92; in i. 75 to i. 107; in vii. 93 to i. 171; in ii. 161 to iv. 159; in v. 22 to viii. 137; in vi. 19 to i. 92.

[2] xi. 37. Diodorus of Sicily flourished about B.C. 40; he wrote a huge history in forty books (Βιβλιοθήκη), dealing with a period of 1100 years (ending with the conquest of Gaul by Cæsar). We have Books i.–v. and xi.–xx.

[3] vii. 213.

[4] i. 106.

[5] i. 184.

[6] *Hist. An.* viii. 18.

[7] The difficulty of the word γεγράψε being used by Aristotle—a word

In this case, it was not incorporated[1] with the work which we possess, as Herodotus seems to have intended, and this is a fresh indication that the work is incomplete. Thus, although Herodotus gave various readings from his work before he finally settled down in Thurii, and evidently wrote or revised many passages of the last four books during his stay at Thurii,[2] he yet neither brought the work to a conclusion nor completed his revision.

Unfinished though the work is, it is so far from being left in a disorderly state, that one of its charms, and of its points of superiority over previous prose, is its unity. This unity is due to its simplicity of conception. Herodotus' one theme is the conflict between the Greeks and the barbarians, and with this theme all the episodes have a direct connection. To this simple conception Herodotus was led by the sentiment of nationality, which nerved the better-minded Greeks to their successful resistance, but unfortunately was disappearing rapidly in the later years of Herodotus' own life. The Hellas of Herodotus includes Miletus and Cyrene, Sicily and Rhodes.[3] He evidently has great sympathy with that state which made the greatest sacrifices for the national good in the Persian wars—Athens; and with a boldness which, in view of the envy and hatred that was rife against Athens at the time he wr te, deserves credit, he does not hesitate to show it. Thus he properly calls attention[4] to the patriotism of the Athenians in resigning the command of the fleet to the Spartans (though, as they contributed the largest contingent, they had the best claim to take the maritime lead), rather than cause dissension among the allied Greeks; and he rather goes out of his way to declare[5] that, however

more naturally applying to the poet Hesiod rather than the historian Herodotus—goes for little. Lucian uses the word ᾠδων of Herodotus.

That Ctesias wrote in order to explode Herodotus' Assyrian history there is no evidence to show. But if Herodotus did write an Assyrian history, we might conjecture that Ctesias' object was to attack him.

[1] i. 84 seems to show that Herodotus intended to incorporate it, and iii. 160 would be the natural place. That the Medes, and not the Persians, destroyed the Assyrian power (Bachof, *Fleckeisen's Jahrbuch*, 1877) would not prevent Herodotus from utilising his Assyrian notes.

[2] Stein (Introd. 23) gives the following passages referring to B.C. 432 or later: v. 77, mention of the Propylæa, finished in B.C. 431; vii. 233, seizure of Platæa by the Thebans, B.C. 431; vi. 91, expulsion of the Æginetæ, B.C. 431; vii. 137, execution of the Spartan ambassadors at Athens, B.C. 430; ix. 73 and vi 98, references to the Peloponnesian war. Thurii was founded B.C. 444, and, even if Herodotus did not go there in that year, he probably was there from B.C. 432 on.

[3] See Stein and Wood (*Catena Classicorum*) on i. 92. See also vii. 157 and ii. 182.

[4] viii. 3. [5] vii. 139.

unpopular the opinion may be, he is convinced that the Athenians, when they abandoned Athens and took to their "wooden walls" in accordance with the oracle, saved Hellas. The democratic government of Athens also pleased him. He disapproved of tyranny and of oligarchy, and believed in equality; and he ascribes the rise of Athens to her escape from tyranny.[1] But this liking for Athens does not make him a blind partisan. He has praise for Athens' great rival, Sparta,[2] and even for the courage of the Bœotians,[3] although they were traitors, and for the Corinthians.[4]

Herodotus' breadth of view and his sentiment of nationality is due in part to his extensive travels, which tended to make him cosmopolitan, and feel his kinship with all Hellenes wheresoever planted; but it is still more due to his being an Asiatic Greek. The natural boundary of the Persian kingdom towards the west was the Ægæan, and farther than this Persian statesmen would have had little temptation to extend their rule but for the Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor. The relation of Greece to the Persian empire was in the time of Darius much like that of Britain to the Roman empire. The Channel might have remained the boundary of Roman rule but for the fact that the tribes of Gaul found a perpetual refuge and an ever-ready assistance from their kinsfolk in Britain, and therefore peace could not be lasting in Gaul until Britain also was subdued. The Greek cities in Asia Minor, in the same way, could not be expected to become contented subjects of the great king so long as their brethren across the Ægæan remained free. It was to the Greeks in Greece, without distinction, that the Greeks in Asia Minor looked for assistance in their struggles against the barbarians, whether Persian or Lydian, and this of itself served to make the Asiatic Greeks think little of minor divisions and much of their common nationality.

A strong national feeling, then, running all through Herodotus' work, is one thing which gives unity to his History. Another is the predominance of the religious feeling of Nemesis, a theory which the overthrow of the enormous power of Persia by a handful of Greeks is regarded by Herodotus as verifying.[5] Nemesis, the visitation which lights from heaven on over-great prosperity, as the lightning strikes the tallest trees and the

[1] v. 78.
[2] vii. 102, 220.
[3] ix. 67.
[4] v. 75, 92.
[5] i-8, 13, 34, 91, 130, 141, 189; iv. 1; vi. 44; vii. 8-12, 16, 18, 20, 203; ix. 112.

loftiest houses,[1] does not appear in Homer,[2] but is to be found in Hesiod,[3] in Pindar,[4] Æschylus,[5] Sophocles,[6] and Euripides.[7] The workings of Nemesis are seen by Herodotus not only in the defeat of Persia, but in the fall of Crœsus[8] and of Apries,[9] and in the tales of Polycrates (iii. 40), Orœtes (iii. 128), Aryandes (iv. 166), Pheretime (iv. 205), Cleomenes (vi. 84), Talthybius (vii. 137), and the death of Mardonius (ix. 64); in the result of Cyrus' expedition against the Massagetæ, that of Cambyses against the Ethiopians, and of Darius against the Scyths (vii. 18). Nemesis is incurred by conspicuous prosperity, but the absence of such prosperity is no safeguard,[10] for no one may escape from the "envy" or "jealousy" of the gods. Short as life is, Herodotus says,[11] there never yet was or will be a man who does not wish more than once that he were dead: Heaven gives man a taste, but grudges him more of the pleasure of life. Thus Nemesis and jealousy, together covering the whole of human experience, afford a universally applicable explanation of the vicissitudes through which individuals and countries go; and these vicissitudes it is the business of the historian to record. This is Herodotus' philosophy of history.

His God is not only a jealous God, but one who visits the sins of the fathers on the children. That Heaven punished offenders in their own persons and rewarded the righteous, Herodotus firmly believed. and he records many instances in which this happened.[12] But there remained cases which Herodotus, like Solon and Æschylus, seemed to think found a satisfactory explanation in ancestral guilt. Thus Crœsus paid the penalty for Gyges' crime.[13]

Polytheism Herodotus practically abandons. He prefers not

[1] vii. 10.
[2] But we find, *e.g. Od.* xiv. 283—

Διὸς ξεινίου, ὅστε μάλιστα νεμεσσᾶται κακὰ ἔργα

[3] *Op.* 198; *Th.* 223.
[4] *Pyth.* x. 65; *Ol.* viii. 114.
[5] *S. c. Th.* 419 and 430 *et seq.*; *P. V.* 936.
[6] *Aj.* 758; *Phil.* 776.
[7] Fr. 964.
[8] i. 34.
[9] iii. 40.
[10] Herodotus does indeed say, vii. 10, that whereas God does not allow the great to vaunt themselves, the small cause him no irritation. But this probably should be considered merely an antithetical way of emphasizing the doctrine of Nemesis, and not as inconsistent with the passage referred to in the next note.
[11] vii. 46.
[12] *E.g.* i. 19, 22, 34, 86, 87, 91, 130, 159, 167; ii. 111, 113, 120; iii. 126; iv. 136, 205; v. 56, 66, 72, 76, 79, 80; vi. 72, 84, 86; viii. 36, 37, 67, 129; ix. 93, 94.
[13] See i. 8, 13, 91. Other instances, iv. 149; vii. 137, 197.

to commit himself,[1] and, though he tells many stories of the gods, is careful not to guarantee them,[2] when he does not deny them.[3] In the spirit of toleration he allows that the effects of an earthquake might be regarded as the work of Poseidon.[4] Strange to say, he speaks of the sun as a god.[5] Perhaps this is a mere and natural inconsistency, or he may have deliberately used the expression to guard himself from the charge of atheism, which a denial of the sun's divinity brought on Anaxagoras, with whom he may have been, and with whose works he probably was, acquainted.[6] But, although not a polytheist, Herodotus was not an atheist. He believes in a God and in fate.[7] From fate neither man[8] nor even god can escape.[9] It is thus that many things, otherwise hard to understand, are to be explained ;[10] and Herodotus is never weary of pointing out how everything was ordained by Providence.[11] Consistently with this belief in fate, Herodotus believes in oracles as a means of finding out what is fated.[12] Instances of non-fulfilment of an oracle are, of course, explained away ; either the inquirer was guilty in some way,[13] or the oracle was a forgery,[14] or due to bribery.[15] It further harmonises with this belief in fate and oracles that Herodotus believed also in omens.[16]

[1] ix. 65.

[2] *E.g.* i. 122 ; ii. 44, 50. 53, 57. 122, 123 ; iii. 7, 16, 111 ; iv. 15, 179 ; v. 86 ; vi. 69, 80, 105, 117 ; vii. 129, 152.

[3] *E.g.* i. 182 ; ii. 57. [4] vii. 129. [5] ii. 24.

[6] *Cf.* his derivation, ii. 52, of *θεός—κόσμῳ θέντες*—with Anaxagoras' account of creation (Ritter and Preller, 52), *πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ. εἶτα νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε.*

[7] *ὁ θεὸς, ὁ δαίμων, τὸ δαιμόνιον, τὸ χρεών, μοῖρα, πεπρωμένη. Cf.* the expressions *ἔδεε, ἔμελλε, χρῆναι, κατὰ κεκριμένον*, i. 8, 91 ; ii. 133, 161 ; iii. 139, 153 ; iv. 92 ; vi. 64 ; vii. 116, 146 ; viii. 54 ; ix. 93, 109.

[8] i. 91 ; iii. 44, 65 ; vii. 17 ; viii. 6, 13 ; ix. 16.

[9] i. 91.

[10] *E.g.* i. 45. 86, 87, 90, 129, 155, 162 ; ii. 120, 133, 139. 161 ; iii. 21, 30, 43, 119 ; iv. 79 ; v. 33, 92 ; vi. 64, 135 ; vii. 10, 12, 16 ; ix. 91.

[11] i. 45, 53–55, 62, 87. 91, 118, 120, 155, 159 ; ii. 120, 133, 139, 161 ; iii. 77, 108, 142 ; iv. 8, 79, 150–159, 164 ; v. 92 ; vii. 170 ; viii. 6–13, 94, 100, 101 ; ix. 91.

[12] The chief instances of oracles are : i. 7, 13, 46, 53, 55, 65 *seq.*, 91, 165 ; ii. 18, 29, 139, 155 ; iii. 57, 64 ; iv. 150–156, 203 ; v. 90 *seq.* ; vi. 76 *seq.*, 86, 135 ; vii. 111, 140–148. 220 ; viii. 36, 114, 134 ; ix. 33, 93.

[13] *E.g.* Glaucus, vi. 86, or Crœsus, i. 91.

[14] vii. 6.

[15] Especially in the case of the Pythia, *e.g.* ii. 49 ; v. 63 ; vi. 66.

[16] i. 23. 59. 78. 87. 159, 167, 175 ; ii. 10. 46. 82 ; iii. 76, 86, 153 ; iv. 64, 79, 203 ; v. 90 ; vi. 27, 82. 98, 107, 117 ; vii. 37. 57 *seq.*. 219 *seq.* ; viii. 20 37 *seq.*, 41, 64 *seq.* ; ix. 91. With this belief in destiny and oracles Herodotus naturally presents us with examples of the irony of fortune, *e.g.* the tale of Adrastus, whose very endeavour to save is the means of his killing Crœsus' son Atys, whose death by a spear had been foretold and guarded against by Crœsus (i. 34-45). It is interesting to observe that the irony of fortune,

The belief of Herodotus in Nemesis and fate gives unity to his work, for the history which he relates is regarded by him as but the working out of a divine plan preordained from all time. But a theory is dangerous for a historian, who may unconsciously be drawn into adapting facts to suit his theory, and it thus becomes necessary to examine the credibility of Herodotus. The credibility of a writer depends on his capacity, his honesty, and his means of information. Under the head of capacity we have to distinguish between the capacity of a writer for stating the results of his own observation and his capacity for estimating the evidence of others: and in the case of Herodotus it is the more necessary to observe this distinction, because, in conformity with the custom of logographers, he regarded it quite as much part of his task to describe the land, monuments, habits, and customs of the peoples whose history he was writing, as to write their history. The historical events which Herodotus recorded happened before his time, and came to him from the lips of others; but the descriptions of countries and peoples are, to a great extent, the result of his own travels. With regard then, to his capacity for this portion of his work, the essential conditions are that he should have been an accurate observer, and that he should be able to distinguish in his statements between what he himself observed and what he was told by others. But in forming our opinion we should be on our guard against applying the standard of modern times to an ancient author. Thus, naturalists of the present day—owing partly to the modern taste for sport and to modern weapons of precision—are accustomed to much closer study, both of specimens and of the habits of the living animal, than any Greek naturalists. We are not, therefore, surprised to find that the acquaintance of Herodotus with crocodiles and hippopotami was a distant one; that he has no accurate measurements of the latter, and little knowledge of the conformation of the jaws of the former; that he is apt to confound the poisonous asp with the equally venomous horned viper; that he makes mistakes about pisciculture; and accepts without close investigation what he was told by the natives. In this branch of knowledge,

which, though it is not, as has sometimes been supposed, a peculiarly Sophoclean conception, is thoroughly rooted in Greek literature from Homer onwards, is not by any means peculiar to, nor is its earliest instance found in, Greek literature. Seventeen hundred years before Christ, a story, which is preserved in the Harris papyrus (500, translated in the *Records of the Past*, ii. 153–160), was told in Egypt of a prince whose death, fated and foretold, was, in accordance with the prediction, brought about by his dog, which tried to save him.

Herodotus falls below the modern, but not below the ancient, standard, and will compare favourably with Aristotle, who wrote on zoology. If we set aside this special department of inquiry, and consider him not as a naturalist, but as a general observer, we find, in the first place, that he recognises the difference between the evidence of his own eyes and hearsay,[1] and that he is generally careful to inform us to which kind of testimony a statement belongs.[2] In the next place, it is generally admitted that "what he saw himself he may be supposed to describe with fair accuracy."[3] Everything, of course, he did not observe. He does not state, for instance, that the Egyptians used gold and glass as well as bronze for drinking vessels; that they ate wheaten as well as other bread;[4] that women as well as men plied the loom in Egypt,[5] and that they drove the woof upwards as well as downwards. But, nevertheless, he gives us a picture of Egypt as he saw it, the charm of which is indisputable, and which is as valuable as it is charming.

As an observer, then, Herodotus may be credited with capacity. In the historical portions of his work we must look for other qualities to establish his capacity. To begin with, he has the first great quality of a historian: he distinguishes between facts and his inferences from them. What was told to him he tells to us, and gives us his authority; he draws his own inferences, but also gives his reader the opportunity to draw other inferences.[6] Further, he does not present us with that version alone of an event which he considers most likely, but lays before the reader all the versions with which he is acquainted, choosing one himself, but also leaving the reader liberty of choice.[7] Again, he is free from the error of infallibility; if he cannot test the truth of a story, he admits his ignorance.[8]

As Herodotus is so careful to distinguish between what he has heard and what he infers therefrom, and to give his authorities, his capacity for estimating evidence becomes a matter of

[1] ii. 99.

[2] *E.g.* ii. 99; i. 184; ii. 120, 29, 53, 113; iii. 45; iv. 173, 179, 187.

[3] Prof. Sayce's *Herodotus*, p. xxxii.

[4] ii. 37.

[5] ii. 36.

[6] vii. 152; ii. 123, 146; iii. 9; iv. 195; v. 45; vii. 239.

[7] *E.g.* he gives two accounts of Cambyses' murder of his sister, of the origin of Cambyses' war against Egypt (iii. 1), of the fate of the Samians sent to Cambyses by Polycrates (iii. 45), of the motives of certain Spartans in supporting the insurgents against Polycrates (iii. 46), of the loss of the Spartan bowl sent to Cyrus (i. 70), of the story of Io (i. 3), of the motives of Orestes in assassinating Polycrates, of the origin of the Scythæ, and of the feud between Athens and Egina.

[8] οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν is a perpetually recurring formula with him.

less consequence. But he is fully aware of the importance of getting evidence at first hand, if possible,[1] and naturally prefers that version of an event which has the best evidence to support it. It is, however, at this point that his theory of Nemesis and fate affects his credibility as a historian. When the evidence for two versions of an event was about equal, Herodotus cannot be blamed for choosing that version which accords with his theory. In such a case it is perfectly legitimate to take into account the tendency of a general law, and to give weight to general considerations. What is not legitimate is for the historian to imagine that conformity with his theory dispenses him from the necessity of further investigation; and there can be little doubt that his theory frequently led Herodotus into taking a superficial view of history, accepting fate as a sufficient explanation of an event, about the causes of which he might have found out and told us more. On the other hand, there is not the least reason to believe that he ever rejected the better-attested version because it did *not* harmonise with his theory. He believed his theory to be well enough established to dispense with such props, and has no hesitation in rejecting an application of the doctrine of Nemesis when the facts do not support it. Nor does his appetite for the marvellous—although it occasionally led him to record, if not to believe, some very extraordinary tales told him in the East, as, *e.g.* that about the cats in Egypt—prevent him from exercising a perpetual criticism on what he was told or from frequently rejecting the stories he heard.

Herodotus' capacity as a historical writer is marred by his tendency to overlook general causes and to see only personal motives, to substitute occasions for causes. Thus, he ascribes the revolt of the Persians from the Medes to personal motives on the part of Harpagus and Cyrus; the conquest of Egypt by Cambyses to an eye-doctor's desire for revenge; Darius' design of invading Greece to the intrigues of Democedes, the enslaved physician, who longed to return to Greece; the Ionian revolt to the pecuniary difficulties of Aristagoras; the Persian invasion of Samos under Darius to the monarch's gratitude to Syloson; and the effeminacy of the Lydians to Crœsus' suggestion to Cyrus that they should be compelled to live luxuriously. But here, again, Herodotus is no worse than the greatest philosophers of Greece, who imagined, for instance, that the unnatural camp-life of the Spartans was, not the result of hostile pressure from without, exerted for centuries, but due to the fiat of a single lawgiver, and also believed that a similar state of things could

[1] iii. 115.

be brought about elsewhere by the mere command of a philosophical king.

Another defect which Herodotus shared in common with other Greek writers, and which, though in a different way, marred the philosophy as well as the history of Greek writers, was ignorance of foreign languages. In the course of his travels he picked up about a score of foreign words;[1] but when he says[2] that Persian proper names express always some bodily or mental excellence, and that they invariably end in *s*, he betrays his ignorance of the language. So, too, his remark that the language of the Troglodytes,[3] of the Egyptians, and of foreigners generally[4] was like the chirping of birds, shows that he had learnt no language but his own.

The result of this ignorance of foreign languages was that Herodotus had to depend for much of his information about the foreign countries he visited on interpreters; and this brings us to the second point we have to consider in connection with the credibility of Herodotus—his means of information. In the case of public monuments or documents, of which there existed authentic translations from the original into Greek, Herodotus' linguistic ignorance would not vitiate his statements, and it is probable that it was on such translations that his accounts of Darius' cadastral system,[5] the itinerary to Sardis,[6] and the description of Xerxes' army[7] rested. But in the case of inscriptions which he had to get translated by his interpreter, *e.g.* the inscriptions about the amount of onions consumed during the building of a pyramid,[8] or about the method of building a pyramid,[9] or the pillars in Palestine commemorating the conquests, whether of Sesostris or Rameses II. or the Hittites,[10] obviously the translation depended on the capacity of the translator, not of Herodotus, and is of uncertain value. Considerations of this sort apply to the whole of Herodotus' Persian and Egyptian history. He depended entirely on his interpreter or dragoman, and the result is that we have rather folk-lore than history, the tale of Rhampsinitus, and not the real history of the Egyptian dynasties; and we are the gainers. The monuments will reveal to us in course of time the history of the kings of Egypt, but Herodotus has given us what the monuments cannot

[1] They will be found in i. 105, 110, 139, 172, 187, 192; ii. 2, 30, 46, 69, 77, 81, 94, 105, 143; iii. 8, 88; iv. 23, 27, 52, 59, 110, 117, 155, 192; v. 9; vi. 98, 119; viii. 85, 98; ix. 110.

[2] i. 140. [3] iv. 183. [4] ii. 57. [5] iii. 89.

[6] v. 52. [7] vii. 60 *seq.* [8] ii. 125. [9] ii. 136.

[10] ii. 102, 136. Commentators differ very much on these passages. Other erroneously translated inscriptions, i. 187; iii. 88.

reveal, and what would have otherwise utterly perished—a faithful and charming version of the popular stories current in the streets of Memphis in his day.

With Herodotus' Greek history the case is different. Some of the inscriptions which he consulted were undoubtedly forgeries, *e.g.* the Cadmeian inscriptions at Thebes,[1] and were known by himself to be forgeries, *e.g.* the offerings of Crœsus at Delphi falsely inscribed as offerings from Sparta.[2] But many were genuine and valuable, *e.g.* those on the field of Thermopylæ,[3] the list at Delphi of the Greeks at Salamis[4] and Platææ,[5] and that of Mandrocles in the temple of Here at Samos.[6] The value of his accounts of the various ancient works of art which he saw is less than that of the inscriptions. Thus what Herodotus tells us of Crœsus, Alyattes, and Gyges may possibly have been the tales which clung to the offerings sent by those rulers to Delphi.[7] But the myth which was told about Arion in connection with the erection on Tænarum,[8] and that about Ladike and her offering at Cyrene,[9] suffice to show that little confidence can be placed in this kind of evidence.

By far the larger part of Herodotus' information, however, was necessarily drawn from the lips of the people with whom he became acquainted. The history of the Persian wars had not been committed to writing, and Herodotus had, therefore, to rely on oral testimony. This is for the purposes of history generally inferior evidence, but its value is materially affected by the number of persons through whom it is transmitted. Next to the evidence of eye-witnesses, that of contemporaries ranks, and Herodotus could and did get information from both classes. This guarantees the substantial truth of his history, but does not allow us to put much faith in his statistics, or in any point in which minute accuracy is needed.

But although Herodotus depends mainly on oral testimony, he is not unacquainted with the literature of his country. He not only, being an educated man, possesses familiarity with the poets, *e.g.* Archilochus,[10] the Cyclic poems,[11] Sappho,[12] Æschylus,[13] Hesiod,[14] Pindar,[15] Olen,[16] Alcæus,[17] Solon,[18] Simonides,[19] and Phrynichus;[20] but he has references to Pythagoras,[21] Anaxagoras,[22] and possibly Anaximander.[23] Whether Herodotus was acquainted with the logographers is hard to say,

[1] v. 59–61. [2] i. 51. [3] vii. 228. [4] viii. 82.
[5] ix. 81. [6] iv. 88. [7] i. 50–52, 25, 14. [8] i. 24.
[9] ii. 181. [10] i. 12. [11] ii. 53, 118; iv. 32. [12] ii. 135.
[13] ii. 156. [14] ii. 53; iv. 32. [15] iii. 38. [16] iv. 35.
[17] v. 95. [18] v. 113. [19] v. 112; vii. 228. [20] vi. 4.
[21] ii. 123. [22] ii. 29 *seq.* [23] ii. 15.

because we know so little of them. Hellanicus was later than, and therefore unknown to Herodotus, as was Damastes, the pupil of Hellanicus. Bion, Deiochus, Hippyas, Eugeon, Eudemus, Democles, Melesagoras, and Xenomedes are mere names to us, and there is no hint to be found anywhere that Herodotus either used or knew their works. The few fragments that go under the name of Dionysius are probably spurious, and the celebrated voyager Scylax probably did not write any account of his travels, certainly was not known as an author to Herodotus.[1] What little we know about Charon seems to show that Herodotus was unacquainted with his works.[2] Xanthus was said by the historian Ephorus to have given Herodotus the starting-point,[3] but the few fragments left of Xanthus throw no light on the meaning of this statement. With Cadmus, Acusilaus, and Pherecydes, Herodotus may have been acquainted, but there is nothing to show that he was. With Hecatæus the case is different. We have the best of authority—that of Herodotus himself—for believing that he knew the works of Hecatæus. In two places he refers to him by name, and quotes his genealogies.[4] Elsewhere he refers, in all probability, to him, but does not mention his name; as when he ridicules people who draw maps of the world and put a mathematically circular Oceanus round it, without knowing anything about it;[5] or when he condemns the theory of the Nile flowing out of the Oceanus, as having no basis in facts.[6] From these passages it seems clear that Herodotus had only a poor opinion of Hecatæus. But according to Porphyry, Herodotus was indebted to Hecatæus for a good deal of his book on Egypt; and this leads us to the third point which we have to consider in connection with the credibility of Herodotus—his honesty.

If Herodotus borrowed without acknowledgment from Hecatæus, he was, according to modern notions, guilty of literary dishonesty; and if he tried to pass off the matter thus borrowed as the result of his own observation or inquiry, he is an untrustworthy historian. The passages specified by Porphyry as borrowed are those about the phœnix, the hippopotamus, and the

[1] iv. 44.

[2] Had Herodotus read Charon's *ὅροι Λαμψακηνῶν*, he would have understood the threat of Crœsus that he records in vi. 37. Whether Charon wrote about Sparta is extremely doubtful; anyhow, there is no reason to suspect a covert reference to him in vi. 54.

[3] *Ath.* xii. 515, *Ἡροδότῳ τὰς ἀφορμὰς δεδωκότος.*

[4] vi. 137; ii. 143.

[5] iv. 36.

[6] ii. 20 *seq.* To these may be added iv. 20 (*cf.* Frag. 154), i. 201 (Fr. 168), ii. 156 (Fr. 284), ii. 15 *seq.*, 133; iv. 8; i. 146; iv. 45; in all of which passages Herodotus probably criticises Hecatæus.

method of hunting crocodiles. These passages apparently[1] are intended by Herodotus to be regarded as the result of his own observation and of his own inquiries from the natives; as, therefore, we have not a single fragment by Hecatæus bearing on these passages, and as Porphyry is our only authority[2]—and we do not even know him at first hand—for this plagiarism, it becomes necessary to inquire what Porphyry could know about it. We learn from Eusebius[3] that Porphyry, in discussing the question of plagiarism, accused Herodotus, along with Menander, Hyperides, Ephorus, Theopompous, Hellanicus, and others, and quoted in support of his accusation a work on the "thefts" of Herodotus by a certain Pollio. Now Porphyry[4] himself is of very late date; he flourished about A.D. 270, and Pollio probably was very little earlier than Porphyry. In the next place, in the time of Athenæus, about A.D. 180, and of Arrian, about A.D. 100, there were spurious works in circulation under the name of Hecatæus.[5] Further, we learn from Athenæus that in the time of Callimachus, about B.C. 250, these spurious works were already in circulation. It becomes therefore probable that Pollio, like Arrian and Athenæus, had the spurious works of Hecatæus before him, and we may suppose that between Herodotus and the spurious Hecatæus there was sufficient resemblance to make it probable that the later author copied from his predecessor;[6] but we have no ground for believing that the spurious Hecatæus is the earlier author. On the contrary, it seems more probable that the spurious Hecatæus was partly made out of materials taken from Herodotus. We may, therefore, reasonably on the whole say, although there is no certainty to be attained either way, Porphyry's charge of plagiarism rests on unsatisfactory testimony.

The speeches, *e.g.* those of Artabanus and Xerxes, or of the Persian conspirators, are not historically true; but no one would think of accusing Herodotus *therefore* of dishonesty in inserting them. It was natural to the Greek to throw into the lively form of dialogue or debate the considerations which moved, or

[1] This is the natural inference from ii. 99.

[2] What Suidas (*s. v.* Hecatæus) says comes from Porphyry. *Cf* Suidas *s. v.* Φερεκύδης Βάβυος and *s. v.* Φερεκ. Ἀθηναῖος, and see *Rhein. Mus* xxxiii. 111. What Hermogenes (περὶ ἰδ. ii. 12) says refers to the style, not the matter: see Hollander, *De Hecatæi Descriptione*, Bonn, 1861.

[3] *Præp. Ev.* x. 2.

[4] Porphyry was a Syrian. His name is a translation of the Syrian *Melek*, and he was a pupil of Plotinus, the Neo-Platonist.

[5] *Ath.* ii. 70; Arrian, *Exp. Alex.* v. 6.

[6] This is supported by the comparison of *Herod.* ii. 77 with *Ath.* iii. 80 E. 447C., 418B.

were supposed to have moved, the agents in historical events; and it was as unnecessary for the historian to warn his fellow-Greeks that the speeches were his own inferences from what facts he knew, as it is for a modern historian to give a similar warning as to the motives which—in the confidence of knowledge—he feels justified in ascribing, though they are but inferences, to historical personages. And when Herodotus repeats with asseveration that the speech he ascribed to Otanes was, whatever some Greeks might think, actually delivered, he means that the grounds he has for inferring the delivery of some such speech were quite convincing to his mind. In one or two places in the book on Egypt,[1] Herodotus says that he went to Thebes, and even as far as Elephantine. But it seems quite clear that in reality he never went to either place. As, therefore, in one passage the MS. authority for the statement in question is doubtful,[2] and in the other the statement seems to have little connection with the context;[3] and as both statements are in ludicrous contradiction to what Herodotus himself says,[4] we seem justified in following Professor Sayce in striking them out.

To sum up, then, the argument for the credibility of Herodotus: his impartiality and honesty in the matter of Greek history seem beyond doubt. With regard to his journeys, a suspicion has been cast upon him, but not successfully, that he was more than liable to the infirmity which is often imputed to travellers when telling their tales. In capacity he was rather above than below the standard of his age. But his means of information were poor. In the case of his Greek history, his information, though the best at his command, was only oral testimony. In the case of his Oriental history, even when he met trustworthy informants, as the priest of Neith at Sais, or Zopyrus the son of Megabyzus, he was entirely at the mercy of

[1] ii. 3: ii. 29. [2] ii. 29.

[3] ii. 3. Prof. Sayce says (xxvi. n. 2): "I have bracketed the words ἐς Θήβας τε καί, which I believe to have been inserted by a copyist. Heliopolis alone, and not Thebes, was near enough for Herodotus to 'turn into,' in order to test what was told him at Memphis. His reason for doing so was that 'the people of Heliopolis were considered the best authorities.' There is no reference to the Thebans."

[4] It is unreasonable to imagine that Herodotus could tell the absurd story about Krôphi and Môphi, and in almost the same breath say that he had been to Elephantine. If Herodotus really went to Elephantine, he would have appended to his tale about Krôphi and Môphi, "but I indeed did not see them." If he was a liar, he would have said he did see them.

With regard to ii. 142-143, this being carelessly expressed, would lead a commentator alone to infer that Herodotus had been to Thebes, and would lead only another commentator to infer that Herodotus wrote to deceive.

his interpreter, and his Oriental history therefore is that of the dragoman, not of the monuments.

CHAPTER III.

THUCYDIDES.

"THUCYDIDES, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war in which the Peloponnesians and the Athenians fought against one another. He began to write when they first took up arms, believing that it would be great and memorable above any previous war. For he argued that both states were then at the full height of their military power, and he saw the rest of the Hellenes either siding or intending to side with one or other of them. No movement ever stirred Hellas more deeply than this; it was shared by many of the barbarians, and might be said even to affect the world at large."[1] These are the words with which Thucydides begins his history. He was born in the Athenian deme Halimus, belonging to the tribe Leontis, on the coast between Phalerum and Colias. His father, Olorus,[2] was related, though in what degree we do not know, to the Thracian Olorus, whose daughter married the famous Miltiades,[3] and was mother of Cimon. At the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war in B.C. 432, when Thucydides, as he himself says, began to write, he was probably about forty years of age. The first twenty years of his life were spent under the administration of his great relative Cimon, and the next twenty under that of the man for whom Thucydides had such admiration, Pericles. About Thucydides' early life and education we have no direct information. We may, however, fairly assume that he met and learned from all the great men who at this time lived in or found their way to Athens. The philosopher Anaxagoras, who has left traces of his influence even on Herodotus, may be credited with having contributed to the formation of the mind of Thucydides, whose views on natural science and on religion are more closely connected with those of Anaxagoras than are even those of Herodotus. The orator Antiphon, whose style resembles that of Thucydides—both are classed by Dionysius as belonging to the "severe style"—may have been

[1] *Thuc.* i. 1. Prof. Jowett's translation (Clarendon Press, 1881), from which are taken all the translations of Thucydides in this chapter.
[2] iv. 104. [3] *Herod.* vi. 39.

Thucydides' literary model, and was certainly in other relations known to and studied by Thucydides, as is shown by the manner in which he speaks of Antiphon.[1] The sophist Protagoras, Gorgias the rhetorician, and Prodicus, have all left marks of their influence on the style of Thucydides. At Athens, though not at Olympia, he in all probability, when about twenty five years of age, heard Herodotus read portions of his history. Æschylus he may well have seen; Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, and Phidias he must have met. Poetry, architecture, science, philosophy, and rhetoric all found in Athens, or sent there their best exponents; all helped to shape the citizens of Athens, and to make it right for one of her sons to say, "We are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy."[2] With these convictions Thucydides could not but "fix his eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until he became filled with the love of her, and impressed with the spectacle of her glory."[3]

Educated in this city and by these means, and endowed with an originality and energy of mind which have elevated him to the level of the greatest minds the world has produced, Thucydides began in B.C. 432 to write the history of the Peloponnesian war, then commencing. Possessing extensive property and the right of working gold-mines in Thrace, and being consequently one of the leading men in Thrace,[4] Thucydides must have spent a certain part of every year there. But the larger part of his time he passed in Athens. The speeches of Pericles he certainly heard; his admiration for Pericles' statesmanship is shown by what he says of it;[5] and he may have been among the personal friends of Pericles. In B.C. 430 the plague, which wrought great harm to Athens, nearly deprived the world of Thucydides' history. He was, he says, himself attacked, and witnessed the sufferings of others.[6] The celebrated debates on the fate of the Mitylenæans in B.C. 427, and the Spartan proposals for peace in B.C. 425, in consequence of the affair of Pylos, he was present

[1] *Thuc.* viii. 68. [2] ii. 40. [3] ii. 43.
[4] iv. 105. [5] ii. 65. [6] ii. 48.

at; and he may have taken part in some of the military operations of the earlier years of the war. At any rate, in B.C. 424 he acted as strategus, being one of the two Athenian generals intrusted with the protection of Thrace.[1] He allowed, however, the Spartan Brasidas to occupy Amphipolis, the key to the whole of that country; the result of this serious disaster being that Thucydides was an exile from Athens for twenty years. That this was a heavy punishment to him it is impossible to doubt; but so far from its injuring the prosecution of his work, it had the opposite effect. It set him free from other claims on his time and attention; his work probably became the sole palliative to the exile's grief; and his enforced absence from Athens gave him the opportunity he could not have otherwise enjoyed of visiting the Peloponnese, and seeing the war from both sides. He says,[2] "For twenty years I was banished from my country after I held the command at Amphipolis, and associating with both sides, with the Peloponnesians quite as much as the Athenians, because of my exile, I was thus enabled to watch quietly the course of events." He seems to have visited the places affected by the war not only in Greece, but, as his acquaintance with the topography and early history of Sicily shows,[3] in Sicily and Italy; and everywhere he sought out eye-witnesses, "of whom," he says,[4] "I made the most careful and particular inquiry." At length, in B.C. 404, he returned after his protracted exile to his country, six months after the destruction of the walls of Athens by Lysander.[5] How long he lived after this is uncertain. He perhaps died before B.C. 396, for he says,[6] when mentioning the eruption of Etna, which took place in B.C. 426, that only three eruptions were known to have taken place "since the Hellenes first settled in Sicily," and this statement was not true after the eruption of B.C. 396. But he may have lived after B.C. 396, and not revised the passage in question. Nor will a passage,[7] in which he is supposed to imply that Archidamas at the time of writing was dead, bear much pressing. In fine, we do not know when he died, or where or how, though tradition says he was killed by a robber

[1] iv. 104. [2] v. 26.

[3] vi. 2–6. Prof. Jowett says (vol. ii. p. 341): "That he may have borrowed from Antiochus of Syracuse is possible, but it is equally possible that his description is the result of his own travels or inquiries. The slight coincidences of language or statement which are found in the fragments of Antiochus, when compared with Thucydides, are by no means sufficient to support the hypothesis, first suggested by Niebuhr, and confidently maintained by later writers, that the account of Sicily in Thucydides is derived from his contemporary."

[4] i. 22. [5] i. 93. [6] iii. 116. [7] ii. 100.

in Thrace. He lived long enough after the end of the war to put into shape most of the history which he began to write at the beginning of the war, as is shown by various passages, such as the reference in the first book [1] to the destruction of the walls of Athens by Lysander, or the analysis in the second book [2] of the causes which led to the final defeat of Athens, passages which can only have been written at the end of the war. On the other hand, he did not live long enough to complete his history, for the last book does not seem to have received the author's final revision, and instead of coming down to the end of the war, brings us only down to B.C. 411, the twenty-first year of this seven and-twenty years' war.

Thucydides began to write the history of the Peloponnesian war, "believing that it would be great and memorable above any previous war." "No movement," he says, "stirred Hellas more deeply than this." The importance of the war, long as it was, and great as the sufferings it caused, is not to be measured by its length or destructiveness. It was, on the whole, a struggle between the two great Greek races, the Ionians and the Dorians.[3] and between oligarchy and democracy.[4] On the issue of the war it depended whether Athens, which was in possession of the intellectual supremacy of Greece, was also to hold the political; or whether the Spartans, who knew how to fight but not how to live, were to be at liberty to plant rapacious and irresponsible oligarchies in the cities that they conquered. These issues, and they were momentous enough, Thucydides saw; one other consequence, and that an inevitable one, Thucydides must have seen, though he could not know how soon it

[1] i. 93. The words are *καὶ ᾠκοδόμησαν τῇ ἐκείνου γνώμῃ τὸ πάχος τοῦ τείχους ὅπερ νῦν ἔτι δῆλόν ἐστι περὶ τὸν Πειραιᾶ*,—"This width may still be traced at the Peiræus" (Jowett), which seems to imply that elsewhere—in consequence of the destruction by Lysander—it could not be traced. Strange to say, the next words of the sentence, *δύο γὰρ ἁμαξαι ἐναντίαι ἀλλήλαις τοὺς λίθους ἐπῆγον*, are considered by Prof. Jowett, in his notes, to be parodied in Arist. *Birds*, 1126. If Thucydides is parodied by Aristophanes, this book of Thucydides must have been published before B.C. 415, the date of the *Birds*. But so trivial an expression contains hardly enough material for a parody. The passage in the *Birds* is also claimed (with equal reason) as a parody of Herodotus i. 179, and the inference from the first part of Thucydides' sentence is much the stronger, and, if correct, fatal to the supposed parody.

[2] ii. 65.

[3] See vi. 79. 6. 82, and for the exceptions vii. 57.

[4] iii. 82. The Lacedæmonians planted oligarchies amongst their allies, i. 19. 76; v. 81. The oligarchs in various cities favoured Sparta, the democrats Athens, iii. 47, 82; viii. 64. 21. Revolts from Athens were not the people's doing, iv. 84, 104, 106, 110 *seq.*, 123; viii. 9, 14, 44; iii. 27. The Four Hundred at once tried for peace with and submission to Sparta, viii. 70, 90, 91.

was to become in its turn a cause and produce other consequences—the necessary exhaustion of Greece, after so long a struggle, that led to the ruin of Greece. Two generations after the end of the Peloponnesian war, Greece lost her political liberty, and with it her literary genius, for want of the strength which had been wasted in the war of which Thucydides wrote.

If these, the political, results were all that is to be learnt from the story of the Peloponnesian war, it would have perhaps an interest for the students of history only. But for those who view the history of Greece from the standpoint of Athens—and erroneous as, for the purposes of history, this view may be, it is the view which gratitude for the art and literature we have inherited from Athens inclines most of us to take—the tale of this war must have, independent of its consequences, something of the fascination which the war itself had for such an onlooker as Thucydides. The hopes and fears with which such a spectator witnessed the successes and disasters of Athens as they followed on one another we who read of them do not feel, for we know from the beginning the result. But notwithstanding, as we read, our hearts are stirred by admiration for the courage with which the Athenians rose above each new disaster, and by regret that so much courage should be doomed only to aggravate their suffering. Still, as we read of each new chance of peace offering itself, now after the success at Pylos, now at the one year's truce, now when Cleon and Brasidas, the two obstacles to peace, are gone, we sigh that the opportunity should be lost, that Athens should persist in treading or be forced along the path of destruction. We watch her with a regret more intense than that with which we watch, impotent to help where we fain would save, the errors of some hero of fiction or the drama; for this is truth and that is fiction; the one is the story of a single imaginary sufferer, the other of the very sufferings of a nation.

Were this the only hold which the history of the Peloponnesian war has upon our interest, it would be enough to earn eager readers for Thucydides in all ages. But this is not all. The losses in wealth and blood, the material disasters and the political humiliation of Athens, which at first sight seem to make up the cost of the war, though they constitute claims on our sympathy for Athens, are not the whole price which Greece or Athens paid for this great and memorable war, as they are not that in the war which touches us most deeply. What touches us most closely is not the sufferings—great as they were

—bravely borne by the Athenian people, but Athens' moral fall. That the Athenians, who abandoned hearth and home to the Persian invader for the common good, whose self-sacrificing devotion to the national cause of Hellas put them far above, not merely the craven Greeks who joined the Persians, but far above the selfish indifference of the Peloponnesians to anything but the safety of the Peloponnese; that the Athenians who saved Hellas should have grasped at empire, should have become a menace to Greece, and brought about the war which two generations after gave the independence of Hellas over into the hands of the Macedonian conqueror—this we feel is "the pity of it." As we trace in the pages of Thucydides the course and causes of this falling off, we begin to understand that the fear and pity which it is the function of tragedy to inspire may be excited by the historian as well as the poet, by the actual events of history when told by a great historian, as well as by the creations of a poet's mind. The story of Œdipus, as Sophocles, the contemporary of Thucydides, tells it, fills us with pity for the man "more sinned against than sinning," and with fear for ourselves when, seeing how every step which Œdipus takes to avoid the crimes he is fated to commit only leads him inevitably to commit them, we become possessed with a sense of the ruthless power of Heaven, and the fearful catastrophes to which the slightest deviations from the paths of righteousness may lead. The same sentiments are aroused by the history of the Peloponnesian war as Thucydides tells it. It was her very patriotism and self-sacrifice which led to the moral fall of Athens. Not only of our vices, but of our virtues do the gods make whips to scourge us. The services of Athens to the national cause made the Greeks look up to her as their leader; she was placed by them at the head of the confederacy of Delos; her energy in prosecuting the war, and the indolence of the allies who allowed her to do the fighting against the Persians, converted her leadership practically into empire.[1] "That empire," as the Athenians said to the Lacedæmonians in B.C. 432, shortly before the outbreak of the war, "was not acquired by force; but you (the Lacedæmonians) would not stay and make an end of the barbarians, and the allies came of their own accord and asked us to be their leaders. The subsequent development of our power was originally forced upon us by circumstances."[2] And the Athenians go on to say, "An empire was offered to us; can you wonder that, acting as human nature always will, we accepted it, and refused to give it up again?"[3] The excuse

[1] i. 96–100. [2] i. 75. [3] i. 76.

may be accepted, but excuses, even when accepted, cannot prevent our actions from producing their consequences; and the consequence of the Athenian acceptance of empire was the Peloponnesian war. Thucydides says,[1] "The real though unavowed cause [of the war] I believe to have been the growth of the Athenian power, which terrified the Lacedæmonians and forced them into war." The war once begun, the next result of empire was the impossibility of withdrawing from the war. When the Athenians, overwhelmed by the unexpected disaster of the plague, were inclined to peace, Pericles put before them, in B.C. 430, the simple truth, which admitted of no reply:[2] "Once more, you are bound to maintain the imperial dignity of your city, in which you all take pride, for you should not covet the glory unless you will endure the toil. And do not imagine that you are fighting about a simple issue, freedom or slavery; you have an empire to lose, and there is the danger to which the hatred of your imperial rule has exposed you. Neither can you resign your power, if, at this crisis, any timorous or inactive spirit is for thus playing the honest man. For by this time your empire has become a tyranny which, in the opinion of mankind, may have been unjustly gained, but which cannot be safely surrendered. The men of whom I was speaking, if they could find followers, would soon ruin a city, and if they were to go and found a state of their own, would equally ruin that." The principle which Pericles thus laid down, Cleon, in B.C. 427, proceeded to put into application. The Mitylenæans, who had originally joined the confederacy of Delos, and now found themselves belonging to the Athenian empire, withdrew. They were, however, attacked as rebels, and conquered by the Athenians; and the Athenians decreed that every man in Mitylene should be killed and the women and children enslaved. As Cleon said to the Athenians,[3] "If they were right in revolting, you must be wrong in maintaining your empire. But if, right or wrong, you are resolved to rule, then rightly or wrongly they must be chastised for your good. Otherwise, you must give up your empire, and, when virtue is no longer dangerous, you may be as virtuous as you please." The same year as that in which the Mitylenæans suffered was to show that the consequences of our actions cannot be limited to ourselves, and that the innocent pay the penalty as well as the authors of a misdeed; for in this year the Platæans, who had stood a rigorous siege with remarkable bravery, succumbed, and thus the war brought it about that the Spartans, who had defeated the Persians at Platæa with the aid

[1] i. 23. [2] ii. 63. [3] iii. 40.

of the Platæans, were about to slaughter the Platæans, and raze to the ground their city, memorable for the defeat of the common foe of Hellas. The pity of it is summed up in one sentence of the Platæans' appeal to the Spartans.[1] "The Platæans, who were zealous in the cause of Hellas even beyond their strength, are now friendless, spurned, and rejected by all. None of our old allies will help us, and we fear that you, O Lacedæmonians, our only hope, are not to be depended upon." The imperial position of Athens, which in this year necessitated the slaughter of a thousand Mitylenæans, whose offence was struggling for their freedom, produced more fruit eleven years later; for as the necessities of empire made it impossible for Athens to retire, so they offered her every inducement to advance. "The Melians," says Thucydides,[2] "were colonists of the Lacedæmonians, who would not submit to Athens like the other islanders. At first they were neutral, and would take no part; but when the Athenians tried to coerce them by ravaging their lands, they were driven into open hostilities." The Melians, therefore, being weak, were to be crushed, and the conscience of Athens, having adapted itself to its imperial position, felt no need of excuses. "We Athenians," said they[3] to the Melians, "will use no fine words; we will not go out of our way to prove at length that we have a right to rule because we overthrew the Persian, or that we attack you now because we are suffering any injury at your hands. We should not convince you if we did. . . . You and we should say what we really think, and aim only at what is possible, for we both alike know that into the discussion of human affairs the question of justice only enters where the pressure of necessity is equal, and that the powerful exact what they can, and the weak grant what they must." Melos was annexed, and Athens continued to advance, whereby she not merely left the question of justice behind, but also neglected the advice which Pericles had given her twenty years before, "Not to seek to enlarge her dominion while the war was going on."[4] Sicily was next attacked. "They virtuously professed that they were going to assist their own kinsmen and their newly-acquired allies, but the simple truth was that they aspired to the empire of Sicily," says Thucydides,[5] an Athenian. The Sicilian expedition failed disastrously, and contributed more than any other error on the part of Athens to her fall. And it, too, was recommended by arguments drawn from the imperial position of Athens. "We cannot," said Alcibiades,[6] "cut down an empire as we

[1] iii. 54. [2] v. 84. [3] v. 89. [4] i. 65. [5] vi. 5. [6] vi. 18.

might a household; but having once gained our present position, we must keep a firm hold upon some, and contrive occasion against others; for if we are not rulers, we shall be subjects.'

It is this tale told in detail, with no striving after effect, but with a calm and cold veracity which imprints the story with painful distinctness on the imagination and the mind, that makes Thucydides as interesting as Sophocles, and the fate of Athens a moral study as absorbing as that of Œdipus. One difference, however, will strike those who read both authors. Destiny, which is the eventual source of all Œdipus' actions, plays no part in Thucydides. How universally useful destiny might be to the historian, Herodotus had already shown. It was a key to which no lock could fail to open. If a storm wrecked Persian ships, this was "in order that" the Persian fleet might not be larger than the Greek fleet. If Xerxes made a mistake in his campaign, this was because destiny had decreed his defeat. But this crude use of destiny could have as little attraction for Thucydides when applied to the solution of historical problems, as for Sophocles when applied to moral problems. Sophocles uses it more sparingly and more effectively. As far as Œdipus is concerned, fate only interposes directly once: in the oracle warning him of the crimes he will commit—and granted but this one interposition, all the actions of Œdipus flow naturally and inevitably. But Thucydides knows not even this refined form of destiny. To Thucydides, a man's own actions are his fate; they are a man's destiny, which decrees what he shall do and what he shall be. The absence of any other kind of destiny from the history of Thucydides does not prove that Thucydides had no belief in destiny. Its absence is satisfactorily accounted for by its being no part of Thucydides' design to entertain theological considerations. His object was to set down only facts, which admit of closer proof than destiny is susceptible of. It will help to the understanding of this and other points to read his own words:—

"Of the events of the war I have not ventured to speak from any chance information, nor according to any notion of my own; I have described nothing but what I either saw myself or learnt from others, of whom I made the most careful and particular inquiry. The task was a laborious one, because eye-witnesses of the same occurrences gave different accounts of them, as they remembered or were interested in the actions of one side or the other. And very likely the strictly historical character of my narrative may be disappointing to the ear. But if he who de-

sires to have before his eyes a true picture of the events which have happened, and of the like events which may be expected to happen hereafter in the order of human things, shall pronounce what I have written to be useful, then I shall be satisfied. My history is an everlasting possession, not a prize composition which is heard and forgotten." [1]

The object of Thucydides, then, was to give a strict and faithful account of facts. He had no preconceived theory to prove, no "notion of his own" which his history was to establish. The actual facts, free from the distortions of inaccurate memories or of prejudiced eyes, once established, his history would be an everlasting possession for the guidance of future generations. To the actual facts, then, he confines himself, without moralising and without theorising. For instance, in his great description of the plague he says: [2] "No human art was of any avail, and as to supplications in temples, inquiries of oracles, and the like, they were utterly useless, and at last men were overpowered by the calamity and gave them all up." What he himself thinks on the objective utility of prayer he does not say; he simply notes the fact that in this case supplications were useless, with the same abstention from theorising as he notes, in the next chapter, that the disease after attacking the throat moved down to the chest. Moral disorders he treats in the same positive way as he describes the plague; he notes that a symptom of extreme demoralisation is disregard of law, human and divine. In the same way he records [3] both that Brasidas thought that he captured Lecythus by supernatural aid, and that when Lecythus was attacked the walls happened to be accidentally deserted. So, too, he notes [4] that the Spartans celebrated their religious festivals regardless of the military situation, and that their enemies profited by the fact. The Lacedæmonians, in accordance with their tradition, consulted oracles, but did not guide their policy by them—*e.g.* they consulted Delphi at the beginning of the war as to whether they should declare war or not,[5] but they left the decision to the general meeting of their allies; and the Corinthians used the oracle to silence scruples as to the justice of the war,[6] but trusted to grounds of policy as the means of convincing their hearers.[7] The Spartans also employed the imputed "pollution" of Pericles, not from religious motives, but for purposes of policy; [8] as they and other Greeks regularly appealed to the gods rather from wont than conviction.[9] Amongst the Athenians the religion of

[1] i. 22. [2] ii. 47. [3] iv. 115, 116. [4] v. 54, 82. [5] i. 118.
[6] i. 123. [7] i. 120. [8] i. 126. [9] i. 78; ii. 71, 74; iii. 14; iv. 87

their forefathers was held in no better esteem. They purified Delos[1] conventionally. The celebrated affair of the Hermæ was a religious offence, but was converted into political capital. Even for their unjustifiable attack on the Melians, the Athenians count on the approval of the gods. And Thucydides recounts all these things with no comment and no expression of his own opinion: he gives the facts. With regard to oracles and portents he is equally reserved. He observes[2] that in times of excitement everything of the nature of a portent is curiously noted;[3] and he records that after the failure of the Sicilian expedition the Athenians were furious "with the soothsayers and prophets, and all who by the influence of religion had at the time inspired them with the belief that they would conquer Sicily." He is aware that ambiguity is of much virtue in an oracle: he says[4] of the Athenians during the plague, "In their troubles they naturally called to mind a verse which the elder men among them declared to have been current long ago:—'A Dorian war will come and a plague with it.' There was a dispute about the precise expression; some saying that *limos*, a famine, and not *loimos*, a plague, was the original word. Nevertheless, as might have been expected—for men's memories reflected their sufferings—the argument in favour of *loimos* prevailed at the time. But if ever in future years another Dorian war arises which happens to be accompanied by a famine, they will probably repeat the verse in the other form." The vagueness of another oracle—"Better the Pelasgian ground left waste"—allows him to say for it,[5] "The oracle, without mentioning the war, foresaw that the place would be inhabited some day for no good." Though whether the foresight of the oracle is to be regarded as human or divine, he does not say. When an oracle is fulfilled he notes the fact; in estimating the length of the war he says,[6] "He who reckons up the actual periods of time will find that I have rightly given the exact number of years. He will also find that this was the solitary instance in which those who put their faith in oracles were justified by the event. For I well remember how, from the beginning to the end of the war, there was a common and often-repeated saying that it was to last thrice nine years. I lived through the whole of it, and was of mature years and judgment, and I took great pains to make out the exact truth." This being so, the Athenians had grounds, therefore, it would seem—whether the fulfilment of this solitary oracle was supernatural or casual—for

[1] iii. 104. [2] ii. 8. [3] viii. 1.
[4] ii. 54. [5] ii. 17. [6] v. 26.

advising the Melians not to have recourse "to prophecies and oracles and the like, which ruin men by the hopes which they inspire in them." [1]

In the same way as he thus prefers to record historical facts without having recourse to any theory, whether of destiny or divine intervention, he records such natural phenomena as were considered portentous, and what was known about them. Thus he duly narrates [2] how when the Athenians were about to leave Sicily, the occurrence of an eclipse of the moon terrified them into delaying their departure, and thus brought about the destruction of them all. But he also notes elsewhere,[3] with regard to solar eclipses, that it is apparently only at the beginning of the lunar month that they are possible. In one place [4] he observes that during a battle in Sicily, "as is often the case in the fall of the year, there came on a storm of rain and thunder, whereby the Athenians were yet more disheartened, for they thought that everything was conspiring to their destruction." Of another engagement he says,[5] "During the battle there came on thunder and lightning and a deluge of rain; these added to the terror of the inexperienced who were fighting for the first time, but experienced soldiers ascribed the storm to the time of the year, and were much more alarmed at the stubborn resistance of the enemy." The plague was considered by many people to be a fulfilment of the promise of Apollo to assist the Spartans. Thucydides says,[6] "The disease certainly did set in immediately after the invasion of the Peloponnesians, and did not spread into the Peloponnesus in any degree worth speaking of, while Athens felt its ravages most severely, and next to Athens the places which were most populous." But he had a few chapters before [7] said, "The disease is said to have begun south of Egypt in Æthiopia; thence it descended into Egypt and Libya, and after spreading over the greater part of the Persian empire, suddenly fell upon Athens." He records all the facts, but does not express "any notion of his own."

The determined resolution of Thucydides to adhere to the facts of the war has materially influenced the form of his work. Having no preconceived theory of his own, no philosophy of history from which to deduce the facts of the war *a priori*, Thucydides follows, not a logical, but a strictly chronological order. The events of each year are ranged under that year. The story of a siege, for instance, such as that of Platæa, which lasted three years, is not told in one continuous section, but

[1] v. 100. [2] vii. 50. [3] ii. 28. [4] vii. 79.
[5] vi. 70. [6] ii. 54. [7] ii. 48.

what happened in each year is told under the head of that year, and thus the story of the siege is twice dropped and twice picked up again. The adoption of this annalistic method by Thucydides is the more noteworthy because there were no annalists in Greece. The materials out of which annals sprang in the Middle Ages, lists of magistrates, festivals, &c., and family records, existed in Greece; but before annals could be developed out of them, Thucydides produced history. To us this chronological method of Thucydides seems, as it is, somewhat clumsy. It fetters the historian without apparently affording any compensation. But it must be remembered that in the time of Thucydides there was no uniform system of chronology current throughout Greece. Later, the method of reckoning years by Olympiads, *i.e.* by the recurrence of the Olympic games every four years, was universally adopted by the Greeks. But in the time of Thucydides each state had its own mode of reckoning, and commenced its civil year, not on the same day as any other state, but when its own chief magistrate entered on office, or on some other such principle. This latter difficulty Thucydides evaded by disregarding the civil year and following the natural year, which he divides into summer and winter. This procedure had this advantage, that it suited admirably a record of military operations, which, in the case of the Greeks, ceased in the winter and were carried on only in the summer. The other difficulty which arose in the absence of a uniform chronology, that of specifying the year, Thucydides got over as best he could by counting from the date of some well-known event, and by reference to the chronological system of various states. This, for instance, is his way of specifying the year in which the Peloponnesian war began:[1] "For fourteen years the thirty years' peace which was concluded after the recovery of Eubœa remained unbroken; but in the fifteenth year, when Chrysis the high-priestess of Argos was in the forty-eighth year of her priesthood, Æneisias being the Ephor at Sparta, and at Athens Pythodorus having two months of his archonship to run, in the sixth month after the engagement at Potidæa, and at the beginning of spring," &c. We, with our fixed system of chronology, say "in B.C. 431." Modern historians, who can specify the date of an event with three strokes of the pen, may arrange events in any order they think most lucid; but Thucydides, having once specified his year, had good reason for adhering to the chronological order of events. The annalistic method might

[1] ii. a.

fetter the historian, but it secured his chronology, which otherwise might have fluctuated.

Beyond this division into summers, winters, and years, no other seems to have been designed by Thucydides. The division into eight books, as we have his work, though made early,[1] was not made by Thucydides. There are traces in the scholiasts of a division into thirteen books,[2] and Diodorus mentions a division into nine books.[3] But these divisions are probably later even than the one we have. Thucydides, however, does sometimes speak of "the first war" or "the ten years' war," and of "the Sicilian war," and the "Ionic war;"[4] and so it has been conjectured that he intended a division into five parts—the introduction,[5] the ten years' war,[6] the period before the Sicilian expedition,[7] the Sicilian war,[8] and the Ionic war.[9] But the narrative flows on without regard to the subdivisions;[10] the references which Thucydides makes to them are few, and they exercise no influence on the form or matter of his work. Indeed, he seems to have neglected any attempt to break up his work into sections possessing balance, symmetry, proportion, or form, with as much contempt as he disclaims any design of making his history pleasing to the ear. The division into years is "strictly historical." Nothing more is aimed at. At any rate, the notion that Thucydides' history is composed on the analogy of a drama, and is arranged in a prologue and five acts, is purely fanciful, and as grotesquely incongruous with Thucydides' conception of the functions of the historian as any piece of "subjectivity" could be. Of all manifestations of power, self-restraint impresses men most, partly because it is the form which power least often takes; and there is scarcely a page of Thucydides that does not exemplify his strength in this respect. Where strong expression seems justifiable, where even it seems demanded, Thucydides contents himself with a sober statement. Events which call aloud for some expression of pity or of horror he leaves to speak for themselves, without a word from him. Where the temptation to any other writer to comment or to moralise would be irresistible, Thucydides resists it. He places

[1] It was known to Dionysius (p. 867) and the early grammarians.
[2] *Schol.* ii. 78; iv. 78, 114.
[3] xii. 502; xiii. 573. But possibly our eight books are here referred to—the ninth being the first two books of the *Hellenica*, which continue the story of the war from where Thucydides breaks off to the end, and were sometimes ascribed to Thucydides.
[4] v. 20, 24, 25, 26; iv. 81; vii. 18, 28, 85; viii. 11.
[5] i. 1–146. [6] ii. 1–v. 24. [7] v. 25–v. 116.
[8] vi. 1–vii. 87. [9] viii. 1 *ad fin.* [10] Except at v. 26.

before the reader the agonies of a nation, as in his account of the Sicilian expedition, or the presence of death, as in his description of the plague, with grave silence.

Problems of political morality, which he had studied for years and in which his keen intellect took the profoundest interest, he states so far as they were debated or exemplified in the war; but he is not betrayed into speculation; he confines himself to facts. On the great problems of life it is sometimes said that it is impossible for a man to hold his judgment in perpetual suspense; but Thucydides seems to have had them perpetually present to his mind, and to have perpetually regarded the material before him as inadequate for the formation of a decision. It is this habit of never going beyond his facts, of never losing sight of his purpose to ascertain and record facts, this self-restraint which never relaxes, that makes the reader respect and marvel at the power of Thucydides. It creates absolute confidence in him, in his will and his power to record the plain truth. It makes his very silence eloquent, and his least word weighty beyond the superlatives, the exclamations, or asseverations of other writers. This, however, is only the negative side of his power. His silent self-restraint prepares us to be impressed by his words, but his words also impress us. His facts are more valuable than others' comments, and for this there is a reason. In Thucydides' history we have the facts of the war as Thucydides saw them; and the difference between his work and that, say, of Xenophon, who continued Thucydides' incomplete work, is much the same as that between what a geologist and a navvy see in a railway cutting, or a botanist and a ploughboy see in a hedge-bottom, or between what Shelley and a farm labourer hear in a skylark's song. That is to say, Thucydides had a knowledge of what happened in the war comparable to the geologist's or botanist's knowledge of his science, and he further had, like Shelley, the genius to transmute what he heard into words more precious than gold. Beyond this, in the way of analysis, it is not possible to go far. The intimate acquaintance which he gives us with the Peloponnesian war is proof of the clearness and grasp with which he realised all the details and the whole significance of the war; but to ask how this clear sight was acquired or conveyed is folly. It is better to try and profit by than spy into genius.

The genius of Thucydides is seen in the way in which he not only conveys to the reader his own clear perception of the facts and the course of the war, but also arouses in the reader the emotions with which he himself followed the various incidents

of the struggle. In other words, Thucydides' literary genius is as great as his historical genius. Over the literary as well as the historical difficulties involved by his chronological method of relating facts he rides triumphant. It is said that his work is without a plan, and this is true; there is no more plot or plan in his annals than there would be in a diary of the war. But this defect is rather apparent than real. Every incident is viewed by Thucydides in the light thrown on it by the whole war, and thus its importance and position is assigned to it as unerringly and as clearly as though all the other events narrated by Thucydides had been grouped with the purpose of giving this one incident its proper literary value. But although Thucydides disdains to strive after the external balance and harmony which he might have obtained by articulating his history. and by grouping his facts so as to reach the consummation of a culmination, still this is, from a literary point of view, even more than compensated for by the internal proportions of his work, in virtue of which each incident receives its proper amount of attention and receives light from and throws light on every other incident and the whole course of the war. But although everything which belongs to the narrative of the war fits in with the narrative harmoniously, there are various digressions having nothing to do with the war, *e.g.* that about Harmodius and Aristogiton, which, however valuable in themselves, absolutely spoil the form of the work, as they also constitute an undeniable exception to the strictness with which Thucydides otherwise excludes all matter which does not bear directly on his subject. Whether this is due to simple neglect, or to absolute contempt for literary form, may be doubted. Errors of taste are to be found in Thucydides—they occur precisely when, abandoning his general principle, he strives after effect—and these digressions may have been inserted by him under the impression that a history to possess literary form must have episodes, since they were to be found in Herodotus and the logographers. At the same time, though his annalistic method involves literary disadvantages, it also brings with it some compensating advantages. The system of dropping one thread of the narrative when the end of a year is reached, and then taking up the narrative of the other events of the year, though it sometimes, as in the case of the Sicilian expedition, interrupts with foreign matter the main narrative, yet elsewhere and more generally affords a welcome relief, and a variety such as is attained in a drama by means of a secondary plot.

But it is in the matter, not in the manner, of his work that

Thucydides' literary greatness makes itself most felt. And here it is difficult to determine what department and what quality in his work claims our greatest admiration. For the political philosopher of all ages, and for the student of Greek thought, the speeches will ever rank as the greatest work of "the greatest historian that ever lived."[1] And it is a pardonable error if, in the luminous profundity of the thought contained in them, we lose sight of "the antitheses, the climaxes, the plays of words, the point which is no point,"[2] that mar the speeches as literature. It is rather to the narrative that we must look for the literary perfection of Thucydides; and there we must turn, not to the philosophical disquisition—great and justly famous as it is—on the effects of civil war, but to the description of the plague, which has had many and able imitators, from Lucretius onwards, but none to approach Thucydides; or to the seventh book, the retreat from Syracuse, of which Macaulay said, "There is no prose composition in the world, not even the *De Corona*, which I place so high," and Gray, "Is it or is it not the finest thing you ever read in your life?"[3] Macaulay speaks of the "intense interest," the "magnificent light and the terrible shade of Thucydides;"[4] and these words apply not only to the Sicilian expedition, but to the whole narrative. In some instances they apply also to the speeches. The speeches are not in all instances devoted wholly to political wisdom. Characters are drawn, as, *e.g.* in the speeches of Alcibiades, Nicias, Archidamus, and Pericles. While in other speeches, *e.g.* the funeral oration, the appeal of the Platæans, the final speech of Nicias to his men, the light is as magnificent and the shade as terrible as in any part of the narrative.

The language of Thucydides is often considered obscure and difficult. Obscure, in the sense that he does not quite know what he wishes to express, he certainly is not. With regard to the difficulty of his style, it is necessary to draw a distinction. When he is narrating events, his style is simple, powerful, and beautiful. When he begins to philosophise and to generalise, he begins to be difficult to understand. But here again we must distinguish. The philosophical reflections of Thucydides are contained mostly in the speeches, and it is in the speeches that he most conspicuously departs from his resolve to describe the simple facts of the war without any attempt to please the ear. It is in the speeches that Thucydides deliberately makes an attempt at form, and whereas when he makes no effort he

[1] *Life of Lord Macaulay*, App. 475.
[2] See *Life of Macaulay*, i. 442.
[3] Jowett's *Thucydides*, xiv
[4] Ibid. 458.

does attain form, he as signally fails when he is faithless to his principle of not seeking after effect. Doubtless, in throwing his own recollections or the reports of others into the form of direct speeches, Thucydides was practically obeying necessity. To the Greek, in whose life, from the time of Homer, public speaking occupied a large place, to the Athenian above all, whose main occupation in time of peace was the making and hearing of political speeches, a history which contained no speeches would have been no faithful reflection of political life. Thus Thucydides felt himself to a certain extent constrained by his desire to write a faithful history to introduce direct oration; and thus he was constrained to strive after form; for to merely reproduce by an act of memory the original form in which the speeches were delivered was, as he tells us, impossible. In this attempt at form Thucydides allowed himself to be guided by the precept and the example of the early rhetoricians, who, though they helped to lay the foundations of Greek oratory, were immeasurably removed from even the natural ease and grace of Lysias, much more from the perfection of Demosthenes. Thus the mistakes of Thucydides are the mistakes of his masters, not his own, and their mistakes were incidental to and inevitable in the earliest attempts to form artistic prose. The florid rhetoric of Gorgias appears in bad taste to us, but to the Athenians of his time it was a revelation. It showed that beauty was possible in prose as well as in verse. Its principal defect—that it ignored the difference between poetry and prose—we, who have great prose-writings to compare with it, can readily see. But Thucydides, who had to create prose, may be excused for joining the rest of Athens in admiration of the rhetoricians. Thus the conceits of Thucydides, to which his difficulty is partly due, are owing to the early stage of development to which prose and oratory in his time had reached.

A second cause is to be found in the undeveloped stage of the language. Although there seems no reason to doubt that thought is to a limited extent possible without language, no considerable or continuous advance of thought is so possible. An idea, once captured and imprisoned, so to speak, in a word, is thenceforward available to succeeding generations. Thus the child in learning the meanings of words is storing its mind with ideas. By means of language the child, as with seven-leagued boots, traverses large spaces in the realm of thought, which its ancestors took years to subjugate by means of language, and which are still firmly held by the words they planted there. We at the present day inherit a language the

total number of whose words is several times greater than the number any single one of us uses; while though there are many words—technical ones—which the majority of us do not even know the meaning of, we can, when necessary, acquire that knowledge by a reference to a dictionary. It is, therefore, hard for us to realise a stage of language in which there were more ideas than there were words to express them, and in which there was not only no dictionary to explain the meaning of words, but the very idea that it was possible to define the meaning of a word was a new and startling conception, which was used by Socrates, the originator thereof, as long as he had a monopoly of it, to the utter discomfiture of all who came in argument against him. Yet this was the state of the language by means of which Thucydides had to convey ideas that the world had yet never conceived of. Further, at the present day our linguistic conscience permits us to take a word wherever we find it if we want it, or, indeed, if we do not much want it. From naked savages on opposite sides of the world we take the words "palaver" and "taboo," as readily as we appropriate a technicality from languages that are dead. But Thucydides borrowed neither ideas nor the words to clothe them in. He writes pure Attic.

Hitherto we have spoken as though the lack of a vocabulary were the only difficulty with which Thucydides had to contend; but a still more serious difficulty was that the language had as yet no settled or recognised grammar. By this is meant not merely that some centuries had yet to elapse before Dionysius Thrax was to make the first attempt to throw together a body of rules which may be regarded as the beginning of Greek grammar. People may and must speak grammatically before the principles on which they—or those best worth attention—speak can be observed and noted in a grammar. But Thucydides belongs to a time when people did not, even unconsciously, systematically follow the same analogies or the same principles under similar circumstances. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at if, in the absence of grammatical moulds to receive it, the thought of Thucydides should overflow in some sentences, or solidify into some shape for which later literature has no parallel or only a distant analogy. Nor is it strange if, under the weight of Thucydides' thought, which would have strained the strength of a more developed language, Attic in its then cartilaginous and plastic condition should have sometimes yielded, and have sometimes betrayed the weight thrown on it.

It has been the custom to institute comparisons between Thucydides and other historians, mainly, one would suppose, because Thucydides is by far the greatest of historians. Between him and Herodotus or Xenophon the comparison must be one of contrast, and is one which the reader may be left to draw out for himself; but on the comparison between him and Roman historians a word must be said. In the first place, in any such comparison it should be noticed that Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, whatever the differences between them, all belong to a literature which is essentially original and creative; whereas the Roman historians belong to a literature which is not original or creative. In the next place, the three Greek historians belong to the best period of Greek literature, but the Roman historians do not belong to the golden age of Latin literature. As to the comparison between Thucydides and Sallust, what resemblance imitation could produce there is; but genius cannot—certainly that of Thucydides cannot—be imitated. Between Thucydides and Tacitus there are some points of resemblance. Both are great historians; both have a profound knowledge of human nature; and both take somewhat pessimistic views of human nature and of life. As to style, both possess great power; both are difficult at times to understand, and brevity is one of the characteristics of each. But to imagine that to Thucydides in his own line it is possible to compare Tacitus, great as he is, is a mistake. The first quality demanded of a historian is credibility; and whatever conclusion we may come to about the credibility of Tacitus, it is impossible to maintain that his reputation stands as high as that of Thucydides in this respect. Thucydides laid the foundations of scientific history, but Tacitus has built elsewhere. Both historians draw largely on oral testimony; but whereas Thucydides understood that the historian should go only to witnesses of the events he wished to record, and that their evidence, and even his own recollection of what he has himself seen, require testing and corroborating, Tacitus was content with hearsay evidence at third or fourth hand. When Thucydides had recourse to documentary evidence, it was, as far as we can discover, to official documents that he went; or, if he has occasion to refer to other histories, it is in a way which shows that he criticised them closely. Tacitus, on the other hand, has as little notion of criticising documentary as oral testimony, and relies on partisan memoirs as though they were wholly true.

We expect in a historian not only capacity to ascertain facts,

but impartiality in stating them; and this quality no historian possesses so eminently as Thucydides. He writes an impartial history of a struggle in which he himself was one of the combatants. Tacitus writes a partial history of events from which he was so far removed in time that we might have reasonably expected from him an unbiassed history. Thucydides' love for his native country—and it was great—never leads him to exaggerate the successes or minimise the defeats or the defects of Athens. Tacitus shares the weak amiability of Livy in never admitting a Roman defeat if it is possible to close his eyes to it. In politics there is the same distance between the two historians. Thucydides had political views, but he was a moderate politician, and his views were such that they rather assisted him than prevented him from comprehending the standpoint of others. Tacitus, on the other hand, shared the yearning of his order after a state of things which it was impossible to restore —yearnings which the nobility of Rome expressed the more virulently because they were conscious that they had not the energy or the courage to do anything to get what they sighed for. Tacitus was, on the whole, hostile to the political régime which he undertook to portray.

Let us now consider Tacitus and Thucydides, not as historians, but from the literary point of view. Both suffer from the inconveniences entailed by their following the annalistic method; but these inconveniences are felt much more strongly in Tacitus than in Thucydides. It is no depreciation of Tacitus to say that, great as is the interest with which we read him, it is not the intense interest which Thucydides inspires. The power of Tacitus as a writer is great and undeniable, and he is a master of light and shade, but it is not the magnificent light and the terrible shade of Thucydides.[1] Both writers have the power of brevity, and this is frequently considered to constitute a great resemblance between them; but there is no difference between them so great and so characteristic as this supposed point of resemblance. Where the sentences of Thucydides are brief, it is because they are surcharged with thought; they are weighty with wisdom, and they sink into the mind. The sentences of Tacitus are brief because ejaculatory, exclamatory, objurgatory. The one is the brevity of condensation, the other of amputation. Thucydides' is the brevity of dignity, Tacitus' the brevity of breathlessness. In fine, Tacitus is a "stylist," Thucydides is none. Thucydides is a perpetual

[1] See Macaulay, *loc. cit.*

demonstration that there is a higher art than that of concealing art—the art of dispensing with it.

CHAPTER IV.

XENOPHON.

XENOPHON, an Athenian, was probably born about B.C. 429, for at the time of the expedition of the Ten Thousand Greeks under Cyrus, which took place in B.C. 401, he seems to have been under thirty years of age.[1] Yet he cannot have been much under that age, for he was already married,[2] and had come to be on intimate terms with Socrates, whose advice he asked whether he should join the expedition or not. On the other hand, there is a story that Xenophon took part in the battle of Delium, B.C. 424, and was saved in the flight of the Athenians by Socrates. If this were true, then Xenophon must have been about twenty years old in B.C. 424. But the story seems to be of late origin. It receives no confirmation either from Plato, who mentions a similar story about Socrates saving Laches in the flight at Delium,[3] or from Xenophon himself; while the passages in the *Anabasis* which bear on Xenophon's age at the time of the expedition are inconsistent with the story.

About the early life of Xenophon we have no information. He belonged to the order of the knights, for his son Gryllus served as a knight in the battle of Mantinea; and the knights, by the support they rendered to the Thirty Tyrants, were so unpopular at Athens that we can readily understand why Xenophon should be inclined to leave his native city for service abroad. What we know about Xenophon's life is derived from his writings, and the first fact that we thus have knowledge of is that his friend Proxenus, a Bœotian, who had taken service under Cyrus, wrote to him from Sardis inviting him to join the Greek contingent. The offer seems to have been a tempting one. Xenophon says that the reputation of Cyrus attracted numbers, not of poor and broken-down Greeks, but of well-to-do men of all ages. Some abandoned wife and children, others

[1] *Anab.* VI. iv. 25 he says, ὁ Ξενοφῶν. . . . ἐβούλετο καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι οἱ μέχρι τριάκοντα, which is supported by *Anab.* III. i. 14.
[2] Cic. *de Invent.* i. 31.
[3] *Sympos.* 221A.

ran away from home; and others not only embarked in the adventure themselves, but lent their friends the money wherewith to do likewise. Although Xenophon consulted Socrates on the advisability of joining the expedition, his own desire to go was too strong to admit of his staying in Athens. When Socrates, who probably saw that to join Cyrus would render Xenophon unpopular in Athens, advised him to consult the gods, Xenophon complied indeed, but instead of asking the oracle at Delphi whether he should or should not go, he asked to what god he should offer sacrifice in order to be successful in his adventure. For an account of the attempt of Cyrus to dethrone his brother Artaxerxes, the death of Cyrus, the perils and hazards through which the Ten Thousand Greeks went in their struggle to return home, the reader must be referred to the Greek historian. It is enough to say here that it was mainly due to the imperturbable presence of mind and cool generalship of Xenophon that the Ten Thousand owed their safety. One incident in the return must also be mentioned. It is that when the Greeks had at last forced their way to the coast of the Euxine, Xenophon conceived the idea of founding a great Greek city on that shore. His project was undermined by intrigue, and was not wholly acceptable to the Ten Thousand themselves; but it illustrates the boldness of Xenophon's conceptions and the looseness of the ties which bound him to his native city.

Circumstances were, indeed, destined to show clearly the weakness, or rather the want, of patriotism in Xenophon. Shortly after the return of the Ten Thousand, Athens found herself at war with Sparta. Xenophon, however, following the fortunes of the section of the Ten Thousand with which he had identified himself, accompanied the Spartan Agesilaus, and thus, in B.C. 394, found himself in arms against Athens at the battle of Coronea. The result of this behaviour was naturally that a decree of banishment from Athens was issued against him. His services to Sparta, however, procured him a new home. He was allowed to purchase lands in Skillus, and there, living in a country which was adapted to the gratification of his taste for sport, he seems to have devoted himself to the composition of various literary works, and perhaps of his account of the expedition and return of the Ten Thousand. The neighbourhood of Olympia to Skillus gave him the opportunity of meeting Greeks from all quarters, while his permanent residence in Lacedæmon increased the tendency he naturally had to sympathise with Sparta and take the Spartan view of the history

of Greece. After he had resided in Skillus for some twelve years or so, the Theban victory at Leuctra, B.C. 371, over Sparta made it necessary for Xenophon to find a fresh home, since the Eleans once more entered into possession of Skillus. But the circumstances which drove him from Skillus threw Sparta into the arms of Athens, and led to the revocation of the decree of exile that had been in force against Xenophon. He does not, however, seem to have availed himself of the opportunity to settle again in Athens. He preferred to establish himself in Corinth, where he is said to have died. The date of his death is uncertain. It is sometimes said to have been B.C. 360. But he mentions events which occurred in B.C. 357 (*Hell.* VI. iv. 37), and his death therefore must be placed later, though it is difficult to say how much later, than B.C. 357.

Among the numerous works which have come down to us under Xenophon's name probably are included all that Xenophon ever wrote—for we nowhere find mention made of any others composed by him—and several which are not from his hand. They fall into three divisions, which may be called, roughly, historical, philosophical, and miscellaneous. The first two classes can only be described as historical and philosophical somewhat inaccurately, for under the head of historical we must include some which, like *On Revenues*, are political, and the *Cyropædia*, which is romance rather than history; while, although it is difficult to find any other term than philosophical to comprehend those works in which Socrates figures, the term is misleading if it is taken to imply that Xenophon was a philosopher.

The work on which the reputation of Xenophon as an author must always rest, and which justly causes him to rank high, though not amongst the highest, in Greek literature, is his account of the expedition of Cyrus—the *Anabasis*. The dates at which this work was composed and when it was published are somewhat uncertain. It seems necessary to suppose that he must have made notes during the expedition, for he not only gives minute topographical descriptions, but states the distance of each halting-place from the previous one; and the fact that he accompanied the expedition, in the first instance, as a friend of Proxenus, and not as an officer in the contingent, seems to show that he had at least the leisure to make notes, if he did not from the first intend to write an account of the campaign. But as he describes his residence in Skillus in the *Anabasis* (V. iii. 7), it would seem as though he could not have given the work its final form before he had been for some little time in Skillus.



Whether we are to place the composition of the work still later, after B.C. 371, when Xenophon removed to Corinth, depends upon the interpretation we put upon the tenses of some of the verbs used in describing his residence at Skillus; and the weight of authority is rather in favour of regarding the passage as describing a place in which at the time of writing Xenophon had ceased to live.

With regard to the authorship of the *Anabasis*, difficulty has been felt in consequence of a passage in the *Hellenics* (III. i. 2), in which Xenophon refers to an account of the expedition of Cyrus written by one Themistogenes of Syracuse. It has been supposed that Xenophon is referring to his own work, and, for some reason or other, instead of calling it his own, prefers to ascribe it to an imaginary person. On the other hand, it has been supposed that he is referring to a work distinct from his own. and really by Themistogenes, of whom and of whose work we know nothing more. A third view is that Themistogenes collaborated with Xenophon to some extent in producing the *Anabasis*. In favour of this last view there is nothing. As for the second view, we know that other members, or another member, of the expedition, Sophænetus, wrote an account of it under the same title as Xenophon's work. While for the first view it may be said that there is some reason for conjecturing that in the *Œconomicus* also Xenophon conceals himself under a fictitious name, Ischomachus. But this is supporting a conjecture by a conjecture, and the second view is the one against which there is least to be said.

The story of the expedition of Cyrus and of the return of the Ten Thousand is one which in its very nature is full of interest and excitement; but it is not just to credit the subject with all, and the author with none, of the interest which the tale inspires. Doubtless in dull hands the story would have been dull; and certainly the interest we feel is to a large extent an interest in the writer, as well as in the fate of Cyrus and of the Ten Thousand. The tale is told in a plain and manly, simple and unaffected manner, which at once wins the sympathy of the reader for the writer. Xenophon writes of himself always in the third person, but he contrives to do so without awkwardness. There is no affectation, and no affectation of being unaffected. There is nothing in Xenophon to rouse the suspicion of any *arrière pensée*, as there is in the case of Cæsar, who also wrote in the third person, but so wrote with an object. The language and style of Xenophon are a reflection of his manly and straightforward character. The style is manly not only in its

vigour, but in that it is graceful yet not adorned. It is transparent, and therein it faithfully mirrors the mind of Xenophon, which was clear and shallow. His language is Attic, but it is not pure Attic. He was true neither to his native city nor to his native tongue. His want of patriotism brought a necessary literary Nemesis. Attic in its purity could only be spoken by those Athenians who lived in Athens in constant intercourse with their fellow-citizens. The Athenian who chose to live abroad among foreigners speaking bad Greek, or native Greeks speaking other dialects than that of Athens, necessarily picked up words, phrases, and turns of expression which the literary instinct of home-keeping Athenians eschewed. Hence the vocabulary of Xenophon presents many variations from the best Attic, and many points of resemblance to the common dialect.

The *Hellenics*, in seven books, relates the history of Greece from B.C. 411 to the battle of Mantinea in B.C. 362. The work was evidently not written all at one time, and seems to fall into three parts, composed probably at considerable intervals. The first part consists of Books I. and II., which take up the history of the Peloponnesian war at the point at which the uncompleted work of Thucydides' finishes, and end with the end of the struggle between Athens and Sparta. The second part consists of Books III. and IV. It is distinguished from the first part both by differences of language and by a difference of plan. In the first part Xenophon follows the annalistic method of Thucydides, arranging events according to the years in which they occurred; while in the second part he does not follow this strict and inconvenient chronological method, but groups events and traces out the history of one group before entering on another. From the third part the second is distinguished by a change of political feeling which evidently has come over Xenophon. Whereas in the first two parts of his work he has a great admiration and affection for Sparta, by the time he came to write the third part, his admiration for Sparta had received a great shock. The Spartans had sworn during the Peloponnesian war to give the cities of Greece freedom, had violated their oath, and had been visited by a punishment which, by its nature, showed beyond the possibility of doubt that it was inflicted by Heaven. The very people to whom the Spartans had especially perjured themselves—the Thebans—had unassisted brought vengeance on Sparta (*Hell.* V. iv. 1). Further, there are internal indications that the first part of the *Hellenics* was composed earlier than the third. The third part contains a reference to the death of Alexander of Pheræ, which took place about B.C. 359-



357, and must have received its final form after that date; whereas the first part cannot have been composed so long as forty years after the amnesty of Thrasybulus.[1]

Before accepting the unfavourable verdicts which have been passed on the *Hellenics* as history, we must examine the leading defects which have been brought against it, and the causes which have been imagined to explain them. The work is alleged to be both deficient and redundant, to be inconsequential in the narrative, and unfaithful to its plan. But here we must distinguish between the first part, consisting of Books I. and II., and the rest of the work. In the first part it is true that many events are neglected or treated with great brevity which from their importance demanded a fuller treatment, while points of much less importance are related in great detail. It is true also that in the first part many things are related in an inconsequential manner, are brought suddenly before the reader without any introduction or necessary explanation; and it is true that Xenophon does not adhere with fidelity to the annalistic method, which, on the whole, he evidently intends to follow. But with the rest of the work the case is different. In the second and third parts Xenophon abandons the annalistic method wholly; the deficiencies, redundancies, and want of sequence are inconsiderable, and the defects of style and carelessness of language of the first two books are much less noticeable.

But in the first two books the defects do exist, and various attempts have been made to account for them. It has been said that Xenophon omits what was to the prejudice of Sparta or to the credit of Athens, and dwells on things discreditable to Athens and creditable to Sparta. But although Xenophon had an honest admiration for the constitution of Sparta and for her military character, he certainly has not followed any systematic design of depreciating his native country and extolling the country of his affections by means of the *suppressio veri*. The omissions can by no means all be accounted for on this hypothesis, nor can the redundancies.[2] It has therefore been suggested that the key to the misproportionate treatment of events in the *Hellenics* is Xenophon's likes and dislikes generally, not merely his political tendencies. This, like the previous hypothesis, accounts for some of the facts, but fails to account for the majority. Persons in whom Xenophon for one

[1] II. iv. 43: καὶ ὀμόσαντες ὅρκους ἢ μὲν μὴ μνησικακήσειν ἔτι καὶ νῦν ὁμοῦ τε πολιτεύονται καὶ τοῖς ὅρκοις ἐμμένει ὁ δῆμος—words which must have been written before the recollection and necessity of the amnesty had died out

reason or another took a special interest he naturally described at length) and yet military matters in which he took a special interest are in many cases dismissed with surprising brevity. A third hypothesis supposes that Xenophon's information varied in amount. Places he had visited, events he had witnessed, and persons he had himself met, he would have a good deal of information about; whereas he would know less of others. And it is true that many places and events which he had himself been present at are described very fully, but many are dismissed very briefly; and he also possesses full information derived from other sources than personal observation.

The three hypotheses each contribute something towards the explanation of the very considerable blemishes which mar the first two books of the *Hellenics*. But though they explain them, they do not in the least excuse them. It is the business of the historian to allow neither political feeling nor private prejudice to influence him, and it is also his business to obtain information of events which he did not himself witness. If Xenophon suppressed the truth and neglected to acquaint himself with the facts he ought to have narrated, he was a bad, and a very bad historian. The only possible way of saving his credit is to suppose that the first two books are an incomplete work, and then further to suppose that Xenophon would have corrected the deficiencies in his work if he had completed it. But these are suppositions which admit of no proof, and find but little support. The first two books were probably composed before Xenophon joined the expedition of Cyrus, and as he lived forty or more years after that, it cannot be alleged he had not time to revise and complete the work. We may indeed add to conjecture conjecture, and conjecture that other literary projects—the *Anabasis*, the *Cyropædia*, &c.—drove the revision of the first part of the *Hellenics* out of his head; and then we may further conjecture, that although Xenophon took up the history of Greece, and wrote, and perhaps published, the two other parts of the *Hellenics*, the first part was never revised by him, and only published after his death. But if we bear in mind that Xenophon was a young man at the time when he probably wrote the first part of the *Hellenics*, and that he was a Greek and belonged to the party which supported the Thirty Tyrants, we shall not have much difficulty in believing that he was to some extent influenced by political feeling; that he was not exempt from private prejudice; and that the interval between the death of Thucydides (before which the *Hellenics* could not well have been begun) and the expedition of Cyrus was short

enough to prevent Xenophon from obtaining full information on all points treated of in the first two books.

Two other attempts have indeed been made to save Xenophon's credit as an historian. It has been maintained that we have not his work as he wrote it, but an epitome; and in support of this view it has been pointed out that Plutarch, in his lives of Alcibiades, Agesilaus, and Lysander, while frequently agreeing with Xenophon, frequently has full information where the *Hellenics* is silent. The inference drawn from this is that Plutarch had before him the original *Hellenics*, while we have only extracts or an epitome. But it is difficult to believe that any one endeavouring to summarise the *Hellenics* would have produced such an uneven and disproportioned work as the *Hellenics;* while the argument drawn from Plutarch only shows that Plutarch had other sources besides Xenophon to draw upon. The *Hellenics* in nowise resembles an epitome, and there is no reason to believe that Plutarch possessed the *Hellenics* in any form different to the one in which we have the work.

The other attempt is based upon the fact that Xenophon takes up the history of Greece where Thucydides stopped. It assumes that the materials which Thucydides had collected for the history of the end of the Peloponnesian war, but which he did not live to work into shape, came into the hands of Xenophon, who was intrusted with the duty or conceived the idea of completing Thucydides' history. These materials, it is further assumed, were of varying character; hence the deficiencies and redundancies of the *Hellenics*. The sole support for this theory is a statement made by Diogenes Laertius that Xenophon rescued the work of Thucydides from the obscurity which threatened to engulph it. But even were Diogenes to be relied on, he says nothing about the materials for the conclusion of Thucydides' work; and it would have been the duty of Xenophon to supply the deficiency in the materials which Thucydides had collected, and not aggravate the defect by treating other points redundantly. But the whole theory is inconsistent with the character of the *Hellenics*, and may safely be rejected. It leads us, however, to an interesting question, that is, the relation of Xenophon's work to that of Thucydides.

Xenophon certainly takes up the history of Greece where Thucydides stops, but it is uncertain whether he designed his work as the completion of Thucydides' unfinished history, or, wishing to write a history of Greece, abstained from going again over ground which the greatest of historians had made his own. On the one hand, the *Hellenics* has no formal opening, such as

the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides have, but opens with a sentence and in a way which are only intelligible if the reader has the concluding words of Thucydides in his mind. Further, there seems some reason to suppose that for a time the first two books of the *Hellenics* commonly made part of the same manuscript as contained the work of Thucydides, and were even regarded as forming a ninth book to Thucydides. Finally, in the first two books, Xenophon adopts Thucydides' method of relating events according to the years in which they occurred, while in the rest of the *Hellenics* he adopts a less constrained system. On the other hand, it is said that Theopompus also began his history of Greece at the point where Thucydides' work ceases, as also did Cratippus; and in the case of Theopompus there seems reason to believe that he prefixed a general introduction to his work, thus showing that, although the point at which he began was determined by the extent of Thucydides' history, he did not intend his work merely to supply the gap which death made in Thucydides' design. The absence of an introduction to the *Hellenics* has been used as an argument to show that the work is incomplete, but several other of Xenophon's works lack an introduction, and, whatever may be the reason of this, the fact suffices to rebut the inference. As for Xenophon's use of the annalistic method, it is said the reason why he employs it in the first two books and not in the rest of the *Hellenics* is that it is specially adapted for narrating the course of a war, and is not adapted for the more general history in the later books. This argument, however, is not conclusive, for if the annalistic method is awkward for general history, it is also very awkward for the history of a war; and if Xenophon abandoned it in the one case and not in the other, he probably had some reason for his proceeding. It seems, on the whole, probable that the desire to complete what Thucydides' death left incomplete was the motive which first induced Xenophon to undertake the *Hellenics;* and that when he had carried the history to the end of the struggle between Athens and Sparta, *i.e.* written the first two books, he had no intention of writing more. He may even have given those books to the world before he conceived the idea of continuing the history of Greece. At any rate, a long time probably elapsed before he began the second part of the *Hellenics*, which was followed at an interval by the third part.

The *Hellenics* and the *Anabasis* are, strictly speaking, the only historical works of Xenophon. In the other works which we group with them there is more or less of history, but they have

other objects than that of narrating events as they occurred. Our opinion of Xenophon as a historian must be based on the *Anabasis* and the *Hellenics*. He is seen at his best in the *Anabasis*. The places which he has himself visited, the events in which he himself took part, he gives an excellent account of. He writes simply, clearly, and effectively. We feel that he is stating truthfully the results of keen observation. Further, the subject being military, is one in which he was versed practically and on which he wrote authoritatively. But other qualities are needed in a historian than the power to describe a military expedition or to narrate clearly his own experiences; and when we come to the *Hellenics*, we find that Xenophon was wanting in those qualities. He has not the intellectual power to grasp the whole of his subject and the general tendency of different sets of events. Consequently he fails to give the proper proportions to the various parts of his work. Nor has he the moral qualities which go to the making of a great historian. Admirable as Xenophon was in all matters of private life, he lacked the power to subordinate his prejudices to the desire of stating the whole truth. He was indeed free from the bias of patriotism, but he was incapable of holding the scale between Athens and Sparta, or of taking the impersonal view of history which honourably distinguishes Thucydides.

The *Cyropædia* or *Education of Cyrus* relates not merely the education but the life of Cyrus, and the fruits of his education as shown in his life. The work is biographical in character, but it is not a biography designed as a contribution to history. It is a biography with a purpose. Xenophon chose Cyrus for the subject of a biography because in him he saw the model of a king, and in a description of his career he saw the possibility of demonstrating the superiority of monarchy to democracy. The *Cyropædia* is, therefore, didactic as much as biographical. Further, the didactic purpose of Xenophon demanded that the character of Cyrus should be idealised. His object was not to discover by careful investigation what the actual facts of Cyrus' life were, but to describe the life as he conceived it to be. Granted, as Xenophon was led to believe, that Cyrus was a perfect king; all that remained was for Xenophon to describe a perfect king. For this purpose it was not necessary to weigh conflicting traditions against one another, or to pursue historical investigations into a period so remote from Xenophon's own time as that of the great Cyrus. It was only necessary that Xenophon should draw on his own conceptions of what qualities make a great king and what things a great king would

do. Accordingly we find that in the *Cyropædia* are reproduced the favourite convictions of Xenophon on political and ethical matters: and we can see clearly that they, and not historical evidence, are the sources of the *Cyropædia*. For Xenophon the model of a state was Sparta; accordingly we find him attributing to the Persians Spartan customs. Xenophon's teacher in morals was Socrates, and accordingly we find the *Cyropædia* imbued with Socratic ideas. For the younger Cyrus, whose expedition he joined, Xenophon had a great admiration, and it is not accidental that the great Cyrus in the *Cyropædia* has many qualities in common with his descendant.

The *Cyropædia* is frequently called a political or philosophical novel. It is written, as we have said, with a political and a philosophical purpose; but it is hardly a novel. A novel must have a plot, while the *Cyropædia* is a biography and has not a plot. At the same time there is much in it which has no claim to historical truth, and some things which are in contradiction with the truth of history; while the scenes, and to some extent the characters, are shadowy, and have no claim to be regarded as real or historical. It is, therefore, fiction to a certain point, although there is in it a residuum of historical truth, which Xenophon may have picked up partly from the works of Ctesias, and partly during his travels with the Ten Thousand. The work, therefore, seems better described as an idealised biography with a didactic purpose. We must not therefore criticise it as history or as fiction, but rather from the point of view of the author, that is, as a didactic work. From this point of view it fully deserves the high position which has at all times been assigned to it. Judged from the strictly literary point of view, it ranks highest among all Xenophon's works. The lucidity, ease, and grace which are characteristic of his style are here conspicuous. To apply the test of history to it is false criticism, and to criticise it as fiction is perhaps unfair, since the author had no intention of writing fiction. Yet it is impossible not to note the weakness of the character-drawing in the *Cyropædia*. In this respect there is the same difference between the *Anabasis* and the *Cyropædia* as in general power there is between the *Anabasis* and the *Hellenics*. Keen observation Xenophon possessed, as the *Anabasis* shows; but constructive power he possessed only in an inferior degree, as is shown by the *Hellenics;* and the same thing is noticeable in the character drawing of the *Anabasis* and the *Cyropædia*. In the former work the characters of the generals are drawn excellently and with obvious accuracy and truth. In the *Cyropædia*, when

Xenophon has to construct characters, he is far less successful. The lights are too high and the shadows too deep: the good characters are too good—Cyrus possesses wholly superhuman powers—and the bad too bad.

The other works belonging to the historical group are the *Agesilaus*, a panegyric of the Spartan king of that name under whom Xenophon served; the *Constitution of Sparta*, an undiscriminating eulogy of the institutions popularly ascribed to Lycurgus; *On Revenues*, the proposal of a policy designed to increase the revenues of Athens; the *Constitution of Athens*, the production of an oligarch, composed probably before B.C. 413. and not by Xenophon; and the *Hiero*, a fictitious dialogue represented as having taken place between Hiero the tyrant of Syracuse and Simonides the lyric poet, on the vulgar fallacy that monarchy brings happiness to the monarch. The miscellaneous group of Xenophon's works, which may here be mentioned before we proceed to the philosophical works, consists of the treatises *On Riding*, the *Duties of a Cavalry General*, and the interesting work *On Hunting*.

The philosophical works consist of the *Memorabilia*, the *Symposium*, the *Œconomicus*, and the *Apology*, of which the last is generally admitted not to be the work of Xenophon. With regard to the others, they are connected together not only by the fact that in each Socrates is the leading figure, but also because they have one common object, namely, to defend Socrates' memory from the misunderstandings and misrepresentations to which the philosopher had himself fallen a victim. Socrates had been condemned to death in Athens in B.C. 399, before Xenophon had yet returned from Asia Minor, and the composition of the philosophical works in all probability must be placed later than that date. During the life of Socrates the Athenians were generally incapable of understanding him, as we may fairly infer from the ludicrous misrepresentations of Aristophanes; and after his death misrepresentations still continued to be put forward, even by persons having, or professing to have, some tincture of philosophy; as, for instance, the Sophist Polycrates. Xenophon, therefore, who had been intimately acquainted with Socrates, and in whom Socrates had inspired the greatest affection and admiration, undertook to give to the world a true image of the man and to vindicate the morality of his teaching and the nobility of his character. With this purpose he wrote memoirs of Socrates, the *Memorabilia*, in which he has recorded conversations between Socrates and various Athenians on various subjects. Most of these conversations Xenophon him

self seems to have heard; some, he says, he is reporting at second-hand. In all cases, however, the object of Xenophon is to defend Socrates' memory by simply showing what Socrates was; and his conviction rightly was that Socrates' life was his best defence.

In artistic merit the three philosophical works of Xenophon differ considerably. The dialogues which make up the *Memorabilia* are disjointed; they have no unity beyond the fact that Socrates figures in all, and they do not give a complete representation of the character of Socrates. On the other hand, the *Œconomicus*, which is a treatise on the duties of a householder, possesses all the unity which the subject admits of, and shows signs of a plan designed with clearness and coherency, which, allowing for corruptions and interpolations, is satisfactorily carried out. It is further justly celebrated as containing the brightest picture of the relations between man and wife in Greece to be found in Greek literature. But in artistic merit both the *Memorabilia* and the *Œconomicus* fall short of the excellence of the *Symposium*. The scene of the dialogue in this work is laid at an entertainment—whence the name—given by Callias in celebration of the victory of Autolycus in the Pancratium; and while the description of the scene is remarkably graceful, the manner in which the dialogue is introduced and the entertainment at length brought to a close, affords an example of dramatic unity not to be found in the other works. The resemblance of this dialogue to that of Plato's of the same name, and the differences, have given rise to much difficulty and many conjectures. First there is the difficulty of determining which work was written first, and then determining with what object the later work was composed. It has been supposed that Xenophon first wrote his work and then Plato composed his *Symposium* as a criticism of Xenophon's and an attack on its author. But as there are no other traces of hostility between these two pupils of one master, this theory may be rejected. If we suppose that Xenophon's work was the earlier, we may indeed say that Plato in his *Symposium* stated his views without any intention of implying a criticism on those of Xenophon, but this we can only do by closing our eyes to many of the points of difference. Further, there still remains the question whether Xenophon's work was the earlier; and, in the absence of external data for dating the two compositions, we are thrown on to internal evidence, which seems to point to an acquaintance on Xenophon's part not only with the *Symposium* of Plato, but also with the *Phædrus*. It is, however, hard to believe that

Xenophon did possess this acquaintance with Plato's works, and the suspicion is therefore aroused that the *Symposium* which goes under the name of Xenophon is not a genuine work.

Finally, the two *Symposiums* lead to a question which, though it scarcely properly belongs to the sphere of this book, may on account of its interest be briefly alluded to here. It is whether Plato or Xenophon reproduces Socrates the more faithfully. On the one hand, Xenophon was no philosopher, and therefore, it is argued, was incapable of fully understanding Socrates; while Plato's genius was in accord with that of Socrates and capable of reflecting it. On the other hand, it is said that Xenophon's very want of philosophical genius is a guarantee that he has transmitted to us a faithful image of Socrates; while Plato has necessarily invested the teaching of Socrates with the hues of his own genius. On these conflicting views we may remark, that if the *Memorabilia* were reports of Socrates' conversation made at the time by Xenophon, we might credit Xenophon's account of Socrates with greater accuracy than that of Plato. If even Xenophon, composing his philosophical works many years after the death of Socrates, had relied purely on his memory for the conversations which he professes to report, we might believe that the treacherousness of memory was the only impediment to our believing in the superior accuracy of Xenophon. But the *Œconomicus* suffices to show that in Xenophon we have not to do merely with a writer striving to give an exact account of what he has heard, but with a writer who is giving the general impression made on him by certain scenes. In the *Œconomicus* we find dissertations on Persian matters put into the mouth of Socrates, which are much more probably the result of Xenophon's own experience than the utterance of Socrates; while the fact that in the same work Xenophon professes to have heard a conversation between Socrates and Critobulus which he can scarcely have been present at, seems to show that he allowed himself considerable license in his personal recollections of Socrates. In fine, if we have to judge whether the impression made on Xenophon by Socrates' life and character was or was not more like the reality than that made on Plato, there can be little doubt that we must prefer Plato. In Plato we have indeed something more than Socrates, but in Xenophon we have considerably less.

CHAPTER V.

OTHER HISTORIANS.

CTESIAS of Cnidus in Caria was a contemporary of Xenophon. He was a physician by profession, and belonged to the family of the Asclepiadæ. In B.C. 315 he became attached as court-physician to the Persian king Artaxerxes Mnemon, and remained in that capacity for seventeen years in Persia, when he returned to Greece and settled in Sparta. His long residence in Persia inspired him with the idea and afforded him the opportunity of writing a history of Persia. This work, the *Persica*, consisted of twenty-three books. The first three books dealt with the Assyrian monarchy; the next three with the Medes; the next seven related the foundation of the Persian empire down to the time of Xerxes, whilst the remaining books brought down the history to the time of Ctesias himself. This work has not survived to our times, but Diodorus Siculus has preserved the substance of much of the Assyrian and Median portion of the history; while other quotations from the *Persica* have been made by Photius, Athenæus, and Plutarch. In addition to the *Persica*, Ctesias also wrote an *Indica*, in which he gathered together all the legends and information he could obtain in Persia about India. This work survived certainly till the time of Nero, but has only come down to us in an abridgment.

The historical credibility of Ctesias has an interest for us, even though we do not possess his works, because not only did his statements conflict with those of Herodotus, but he very emphatically accused Herodotus of falsity. There can be little doubt that Ctesias had much better materials for an Oriental history than had Herodotus. He not only lived for seventeen years among the Persians, but he spoke their language and had access to the royal archives. Even with our fragmentary acquaintance with his works, we can see that, in consequence of his superior opportunities, his work was, as history, in one respect superior to that of Herodotus. Whereas Herodotus conceives Oriental history from a wholly Greek point of view, assigning Greek customs, modes of thought, and motives to the Medes and Persians: Ctesias, on the other hand, owing to his acquaintance with Persian life and his access to Persian documents, thoroughly realised the Persian view of life, and was at least free from the error of ascribing manners and motives to the Persians which were quite alien to them. But credibility in a



historian requires something more than the opportunity of using good materials. The historian must be honest and capable. Whether Ctesias was capable, we have no direct means of ascertaining, but it is not probable that he was in advance of his age in the investigation of historical truth, or that he could distinguish between good and bad evidence for events of remote antiquity. His honesty is open to more serious doubts. His *Indica* was generally regarded in antiquity as abounding in falsehoods; and, further, he seems to have represented himself as engaged in a diplomatic character after the battle of Cunaxa, which, as far as we can judge, was not the case. This inclination to exaggerate his own importance at the expense of the truth probably receives another exemplification in his eagerness to attract attention to himself by loudly calling Herodotus a liar.

A loss much more to be regretted than the disappearance of Ctesias' works is that of Theopompus' histories. Theopompus was born of good family in Chios about B.C. 380. At an early age he shared the exile of his father, who was banished from Chios because of his sympathy or his intrigues with the Lacedæmonians. This, however, had no ill effect upon the education of Theopompus, who became the most distinguished pupil of the celebrated orator Isocrates at Athens. After this Theopompus made extensive travels, and he himself said that there was no Pan Hellenic festival and no important town in which he had not delivered a speech and left behind him a reputation. About B.C. 350 he won the prize which was offered for orators by the Carian queen Artemisia in honour of her deceased husband Mausolus. He was eventually restored to his native Chios, thanks to Alexander of Macedon, and there led the Macedonian party. When, however, the anti-Macedonian party gained the upper hand he was forced to flee, and, after seeking a refuge in vain in various Greek towns, he found shelter in Egypt. The date, place, and manner of his death are unknown.

Theopompus was a prolific writer. In addition to numerous epideictic speeches, he composed a *Hellenica* in twelve books, and a *Philippica* in fifty-eight. His history of Greece covered the period from B.C. 411, at which the history of Thucydides ceases, to the sea-fight of Cnidus in B.C. 394. His *Philippica* was a history of Greece during the reign of Philip of Macedonia, B.C. 360 to B.C. 336. The enormous extent of the latter is accounted for by the fact that it was full of long episodes, in which not even the name of Philip occurred. Indeed, when the later Philip excluded extraneous matter of this kind from the work, it was found that of the fifty-eight books of the

Philippica only sixteen were left relating to Philip. This helps us to understand the remark made by Isocrates with regard to his two pupils Theopompus and Ephorus, that the latter needed the spur, the former the rein. The historical work of Theopompus seems to have been marked by great impartiality and considerable power. He was not blind either to the merits or the faults of Philip, and he brought both into strong relief. His criticism of the Athenians of his time is severe: the young men devoted themselves to hetæræ and flute-players, the older men to dicing, and the whole population to festivals and feasting rather than to the affairs of the state. He seems to have had the power of psychological analysis and of divining motives, especially of the less creditable kind. He had strong aristocratical tendencies, but was not prevented by them from doing justice to the greatness of Pericles; and although in some cases personal prejudice seems to have had undue but not unnatural weight with him, he seems to have been honourably distinguished both by the desire and the capacity to tell the truth. From Thucydides he differed in two important respects; he wrote much more in quantity, and consequently much less carefully; and he was a purely literary, not a practical man, as was shown by his descriptions of battles, which not unfrequently, when compared with the localities in which the battles actually took place, were seen to be quite impossible.

Ephorus, the pupil of Isocrates who needed the spur, also wrote a history in thirty books, from the return of the Heraclidæ to the siege of Perinthus, B.C. 341, which was continued by his son Demophilus. Ephorus was born in the little town of Cyme in Æolis, probably about B.C. 380. He was sent by his father to Athens to be educated as an orator and a practical statesman under Isocrates; but when he had gone through the ordinary course of Isocrates, he had made such little way that his father paid a second fee of a thousand drachmæ, and had him put through the course again. Even then he was none the better fitted for practical life, although he had made advance enough to win the crown which Isocrates offered every month to his most successful pupil. Accordingly, being possessed of independent means, he devoted himself, on the advice of Isocrates, to writing history. Although he seems to have been justly ranked in antiquity as inferior to Theopompus, his conception of history and of the methods of historical investigation shows a distinct advance on his predecessors who had devoted themselves to the history of remote times. He was the first author to compose a universal history. He seems to



have recognised in theory the distinction between mythical and historical times, though in practice he failed always to observe the distinction, much as in the same way he wrote *on* style, though not in good style. In selecting his authorities for ancient history, he seems to have recognised the necessity of obtaining contemporary evidence wherever possible, and with this object he quoted verses of Tyrtæus and Alcman, and utilised inscriptions. But even here he failed in discretion. For the time of Pericles he took as his authorities the comic poets, who were, indeed, contemporary, but not trustworthy. Finally, we seem to find the measure of the man—an amiable man indeed—in what Strabo tells us: his affection for his little native town was unbounded, and at the close of each section of his history he always remarks, "during this period the Cymæans remained quiet."

Simonides of Cos, according to Suidas, lived before the Peloponnesian war, and wrote a *Genealogy*, apparently mythical, in four books. Herodorus of Heraclea was a contemporary of Socrates. He seems to have endeavoured to extract history from epic poems which have not survived to our time, and to have written works on Heracles and the Argonauts, in which he treated geographical and chronological questions at length. Ion, the dramatic poet, is said to have written, in addition to the *Epidemiæ*, a work on the colonisation of Chios. Stesimbrotus of Thasos, a contemporary of Pericles, lived and taught at Athens. He spent much labour on explaining Homer allegorically, and one of his pupils, Antimachus, seems to have been urged by his example to undertake the task of editing Homer. His work on Themistocles, Thucydides, and Pericles, seems to have been not so much history as a violent political attack upon those politicians, and quite devoid of any value for purposes of history. Hippias the Elean, a learned Sophist, made a *List of Victors in the Olympian Games*. Anaximander of Miletus, not to be confused with the philosopher, was a contemporary of Ctesias, and wrote a mythical history entitled the *Heroölogia*. Critias, the chief of the Thirty Tyrants, not only was an orator, a philosopher, a dramatist, and a writer of political elegy, but also wrote on the *Constitution of Sparta*, the *Constitution of Thessaly*, and, more doubtful, on the *Constitution of Athens*. Sophænetus of Stymphalus wrote an account of the expedition of Cyrus entitled the *Anabasis*, in which he had himself taken part. Cratippus wrote a continuation of Thucydides' history, covering the same period as Theopompus in his *Hellenica* dealt with. Aristippus of Cyrene wrote a

History of Africa. A *History of Sicily* was written by Hermias of Methymna; histories of Greece by Dionysodorus, a Bœotian, and by Anaxis, also a Bœotian; a *History of Amphipolis* and of Greece from the earliest times to the death of Philip by Zoilus the Homeromastix; a *History of the Sacred War* by Cephisodorus; a *History of Africa* by Theochrestus; histories of Persia by Heraclides of Cyme and by Dino; a *History of Egypt* by Aristagoras of Miletus, who is not to be confounded with either the author of the Ionic revolt or the comic poet of that name; while Dionysius the elder, tyrant of Syracuse, and Theocritus of Chios, a Sophist, are also mentioned as historians. A relation by marriage of Dionysius the elder was Philistus of Syracuse. Although an adherent of tyranny, he was banished by Dionysius, and in exile he composed his *History of Sicily* in seven books, which began a century before the Trojan war, and came down to the capture of Agrigentum in B.C. 406, thus including the reign of the elder Dionysius. He was recalled from exile by the younger Dionysius, and began a history of his reign, which, however, he did not live to complete. The opinion of antiquity was adverse to Philistus, who is spoken of as a petty sycophant, who wrote his history to flatter Dionysius and obtain a revocation of his sentence of exile. But, in accepting this verdict, we must allow for the fact that its unfavourable character was probably due in part to the exaggerations of Timæus, a later historian. Philistus seems to have imitated Thucydides—according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus he carried his imitation so far as to leave his work incomplete!—and to have plagiarised from his account of the Sicilian expedition. The uncompleted history of Philistus was continued by Athanis (or Athanas) of Syracuse. Other writers of Syracusan history were Antandros and Pallias. Here, finally, we may mention Æneas, surnamed the Tactician, who wrote on *Strategics*, a work in several books, of which one only, on siege defence, has come down to us. Its literary worth is of the slightest. The deviations from the best Attic, which are a feature of Xenophon's style, are carried by Æneas to the point of barbarism.

BOOK II.

ORATORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNINGS OF RHETORIC AND THE FIRST LOGOGRAPHERS.

ELOQUENCE at all times existed among the Greeks, but of oratory we find no traces until the time of the Peloponnesian war. In Homer eloquence ranks as high as doughty deeds;[1] Nestor,[2] Odysseus,[3] and Menelaus have each his own style, distinguished and characterised in a manner which shows the existence and appreciation of eloquence in the earliest times.[4] Most of the tyrants in the various cities of Greece owed the power they usurped in no small degree to the eloquence which enabled them to gain ascendancy over the people, and the existence of such proper names as Pythagoras, Euagoras, Protagoras, &c.—all implying abilities in speaking—shows the value commonly set upon a quality so useful in political life. Even without the express testimony of Thucydides,[5] we should have no hesitation in ascribing the achievements of Themistocles to his powers of eloquence; and the thunders of Pericles, though their echoes reach our ears only in a few phrases which Aristotle has preserved, are testified to by both the historian and the comedians[6] of his time.

In all these cases, however, the triumphs of eloquence were due rather to matter than manner. It was the force of Themistocles' genius and the comprehensive grasp of Pericles' mind that influenced their audience: whatever of charm there was in their speeches, though not without effect upon their hearers, was

[1] *Il.* ix. 443. [2] *Il.* i. 248. [3] *Il.* iii. 212.
[4] For an explicit recognition of the power of eloquence, *cf. Od.* viii. 167.
[5] i. 138: καὶ ἃ μὲν μετὰ χεῖρας ἔχοι καὶ ἐξηγήσασθαι οἷός τε.
[6] Arist. *Ach.* 530: Περικλέης οὐλύμπιος ἥστραπτ' ἐβρόντα ξυνεκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα.

probably not premeditated or deliberately aimed at by the speakers. Speech is an instrument for the communication of ideas and feelings, which has to be used for some considerable time before the instrument itself becomes an object of attention, and before its capacities are realised, improvements added or beauty consciously imparted to it. It is only when men have come to recognise that the end at which eloquence aims can be better attained when aided by art, that native and untutored eloquence becomes finished oratory.

For the development of eloquence the first requisite is freedom of speech. Under an Asiatic despotism there is no public speaking: in a Homeric aristocracy there was lacking the reaction of audience on speaker, which is essential to eloquence. It is only when a free citizen must rely on words to influence or to guide his fellow-citizens that eloquence can grow. In the next place, when the eloquence which is the fruit of political freedom has been called into existence, its further development is conditioned by the general culture of the time. The lower the level of education in the audience, the lower the quality of eloquence capable of being used with effect. When, however, in consequence of the spread of culture, the general body of citizens becomes more critical, eloquence, to effect its object, must rise in quality. The third condition on which the rise of oratory depends is the conception of the possibilities of prose composition. Poetry is the first form which a literature takes, and, owing to the action of "the cake of custom," it is only when poetry has run most of its course that the possibility dawns on men of investing prose with literary merit.

We now are in a position to recognise that, although previously eloquence had existed in many Greeks as a faculty and a gift, it was not until the concurrence of the conditions we have enumerated that oratory was possible as an art. At Athens the political freedom of speech which is the first requisite for the growth of eloquence followed the Persian wars; and the Athenians had not long enjoyed this condition before the Sophists by their encyclopædic knowledge and their systematic instruction brought about the second requisite, that of an elevation of the standard of general culture. At the same time, too, and indirectly owing to the labours of the Sophists, history, in the shape of Herodotus' work, demonstrated by example the possibility of literary prose.

Among the Sophists mention must be made of Protagoras, who specially exercised some influence on the development of

oratory. Protagoras of Abdera (B.C. 485–415) offered the youth of Athens an education of a general description which should fit them for all the requirements of life; and public speaking, being one of the chief requirements of life at Athens, was naturally included in this education. By means of his dialectic he professed to enable his pupils, without being geometers, to defeat a geometer in argument, and generally to make the weaker argument victorious.[1] It is important also to notice that Protagoras composed "common-places"[2] of general applicability, which he made his pupils learn and introduce into their speeches.

But while the Sophists from the East were either directly, as Protagoras, or indirectly, as Prodicus and Hippias, preparing the ground at Athens, the seeds of oratory were being sown in the West; for although Athens was the eventual home of Hellenic oratory, she was in the earlier stages of the art outstripped by the colonies. The eloquence of Themistocles was practised and that of Pericles was prepared, while the pupils of the Sophists committed portions of their speech to memory before proceeding to deliver it, but in all these cases method was wanting and theory was unknown. It was in Sicily that the first attempts were made to provide a theory of rhetoric. The Sicilians had the reputation of being a controversial people,[3] and it was from the practical needs of the time that the theory of rhetoric was wrought out.[4] When the tyrant Thrasybulus was overthrown in Syracuse and a democracy was established, innumerable lawsuits for the restitution of property, alleged to have been violently taken by the tyrant and his creatures from the lawful owners, were instituted, and the practical necessity of defending or regaining one's own by speaking before a democratic court of law brought into prominence the advantage of knowing how to make an intelligible and effective speech. Thus, to meet the needs of those who were or might be forced into law, Corax framed a rudimentary theory of rhetoric.[5] This consisted of little more than distinguishing and stating the parts of which a speech should consist—the introduction, exposition, arguments, subsidiary remarks, and peroration—and bringing into prominence the

[1] τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν. [2] τόποι, loci.

[3] Cic. *Brut.* 46 (quoting from Aristotle): quod esset acuta illa gens et controversa natura.

[4] *Ibid.* Itaque ait Aristoteles cum sublatis in Sicilia tyrannis res privatae longo intervallo iudiciis repeterentur, tum primum a controversia natam artem et praecepta Coracem et Tisiam conscripsisse.

[5] τέχνη.

argument from probability.[1] This argument, which was still further developed by Tisias, the pupil of Corax, whether used to supplement or to take the place of evidence, consisted, as its name implies, in demonstrating how probable, *a priori*, it was that what the speaker alleged really happened.

The law-courts of Athens, though for different reasons, were as busy as those of Syracuse, and thus, as the conditions of the two places were similar, it is easy to see how readily the rhetoric of Sicily was transferred to the soil of Attica. This transference was not effected by Gorgias, as is sometimes said, although the way for it was prepared by him. Sent in B.C. 427 by his native city, Leontini, to implore the aid of Athens against Syracuse, Gorgias made a deep impression on the Athenians by the brilliance of his oratory. Gorgias' oratory, however, was not based on the theory of Corax or Tisias, nor did it owe its success to this. It was not by method or arrangement, but by the mere beauty (as it was then considered) of his diction that Gorgias gained his fame and roused the Athenians to a sense of what was possible in oratory. Tested by the standard of later oratory, Gorgias cannot be ranked high. As was natural at a time when prose was only beginning to exist, Gorgias conceived but inadequately the difference between it and poetry, and consequently foisted into his prose expressions suited only to poetry. His fragments (for the two speeches, the Encomium and the speech for Palamedes ascribed to him are of doubtful authenticity) show much extravagance of antithesis and parallelism, and suffer from a plethora of words.

The theory of rhetoric Gorgias did not teach, and in point of style, in his endeavour to compensate by poetry of expression for the loss of the metre of verse, he exercised more influence on the prose of Thucydides than on Athenian forensic oratory.

At Athens, as at Syracuse, many a man found himself in the position of having to appear in a law-court without being able to make a speech. This gave rise at Athens to the practice of procuring some one else to write the needful speech, and then committing it to memory. The men who wrote these speeches, and thus developed the idea suggested by the common-places of Protagoras and Gorgias, were called logographers.[2] Their importance is twofold. In the first place, they raised oratory to an

[1] *εἰκός.*

[2] Schol. Plat. *Phædr.* p. 317, Bekk: *λογογράφους γὰρ ἐκάλουν οἱ παλαιοὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ μισθῷ λόγους γράφοντας καὶ πιπράσκοντας αὐτοὺς εἰς δικαστήρια, ῥήτορας δὲ τοὺς δι' ἑαυτῶν λέγοντας.*

art; and next, they made it, what it had not hitherto been, a department of literature.

Both these results were due to the practice, introduced by the logographers, of writing speeches. Previously, statesmen, being concerned only with the practical object of carrying out their plans, and not interesting themselves in developing their speeches artistically, had no reason for writing them out beforehand, or, when they had attained their object, for publishing them subsequently. And even when the practice of composing and publishing speeches had established itself, the traditions of statesmanship were opposed to a politician's descending to the level of a Sophist in this respect. For not only were the Sophists suspected of speaking rather for effect than truth, but they also received money for their services, which was repugnant to Athenian sentiment. The logographers, on the other hand, were led by professional reasons to write out the whole of a speech for a client, and having done so, when the trial was at a successful end, were naturally inclined to publish the speech for the sake of advertising their ability. Thus we owe to the logographers the literature of oratory.

The earliest known logographer is Antiphon of Athens. Of him we know practically little more than is told us in the famous chapter of Thucydides,[1] which gave rise in antiquity to the conjecture that the historian was a pupil of the orator. Born in the time of the Persian wars, rather younger than Gorgias and some years older than Thucydides, Antiphon, the son of Sophilus, of the deme of Rhamnos, gave early proof of his oligarchical tendencies in politics by defending the peoples of Samothrace and Lindus against charges as to the non-payment by them of their tribute as allies to Athens. After the defeat of the Sicilian expedition, he took the main share in establishing the tyranny of the Four Hundred. On the failure of this revolution, Antiphon joined the extreme oligarchs in their resolve to make—in opposition to the moderate oligarchs—no concessions to the people, and departed as member of an embassy to treat with Sparta for assistance on any terms against the people. When he returned to Athens he was impeached before the council; was thereupon charged with treason, condemned, and executed (B.C. 411).[2]

[1] viii. 68.

[2] The speech which he made in his defence, entitled *ἐν τῷ περὶ μεταστάσεως*, and which has not come down to us, was the greatest he ever composed, and is referred to in the Eudemian Ethics, iii. 5: *καὶ μᾶλλον ἂν φροντίσειεν ἀνὴρ μεγαλόψυχος τί δοκεῖ ἐπὶ σπουδαίῳ ἢ πολλοῖς τοῖς τυγχά-*

In the troubled times of the later years of the Peloponnesian war, Antiphon's is a dark and mysterious figure. He was, according to Thucydides, the greatest orator of his day, and yet he himself practically never spoke in public. His talent was so great as to be suspicious in the eyes of the people. He toiled for years in the darkness and underground workings of oligarchical clubs and secret societies, and only emerged to the surface of politics voluntarily when he could at last establish the tyranny of the Four Hundred. Though destitute of the political morality which teaches that an existing constitution should be changed only by legal agitation, faithless to the oath which bound him, as other citizens, to maintain the democracy of Athens, author of a reign of terror which was based on methodical and wholesale assassination, Antiphon is called a man of unsurpassed virtue by Thucydides. The explanation of this is that he was an oligarch distinguished by two qualities; he had no personal ambition, and he was faithful to his cause. He worked for his party during many years without putting himself forward for office or reward, and, when the hour of triumph came, he did not abuse it for personal gain. When the Four Hundred fell, he did not, like Theramenes, desert his cause, nor, like his fellow-ambassadors to Sparta, fly from the danger incurred by returning to Athens. He would sacrifice to Sparta everything that gave an Athenian cause to be proud of his country in order to destroy the democracy of Athens, but he faced death rather than betray his party.

Few as are the works of Antiphon which have come down to us (and although probably all of these few fall within the ten years which follow the peace of Nicias), they not only show us the beginnings of Attic prose, but they also permit us to see Attic prose and Attic oratory in the process of development. As we have already said, the practice of writing a whole speech for another person to deliver was but the extension of the system of composing "common-places," or general arguments to be inserted in speeches otherwise extemporary. The speeches of Antiphon, however, were not only composed to be delivered as wholes, but they also contain many common-places repeated in the various speeches, and thus we have present in Antiphon both the old system of the rhetoricians and the new system of the logographers, designed to take the place of the old.

Again, one of the first things that received attention and illustration at the hands of the Sicilian rhetoricians was the

νουσιν, ὥσπερ Ἀντιφῶν ἐφη πρὸς Ἀγάθωνα κατεψηφισμένος τὴν ἀπολογίαν ἐπαινέσαντα.

argument from general probability;[1] and here, too, Antiphon betrays the rudimentary stage in which his oratory still is. His strength lies mainly in his treatment of general probabilities, and he is never weary of reproducing such arguments in a variety of forms. The analysis and development of evidence could only come later in the history of forensic oratory, and while this, the true mode of procedure, remained in embryo, general probability and matter really foreign to the point naturally received the orator's greatest attention. Correlated with this immaturity is Antiphon's inferiority in the exposition of the facts of his case. His own mind and the sophistical temper of his time impelled him to neglect the simple business of narrating facts, in order that he might devote himself to the more congenial work of employing his subtlety in *a priori* arguments and ingenious hypotheses.

A further indication of immaturity is to be noticed in the absence of individual *ethos*[2] from the speeches of Antiphon. His speeches have an ethos, but it is the same in all. They all have the same character of manly simplicity and honest directness. But there is no attempt to make any difference between the character of the speech put in the mouth of the young Mitylenæan who is defending himself from the charge of having murdered Herodes, and that of the speech of the Athenian charged with the death of a choreutes, who had discharged the duties of choregus more than once, was a member of the Council, and must therefore have been of advanced years and large experience. From an artistic point of view such indiscrimination must be considered a defect, and from a practical point of view it is a still more serious fault; for the practice of employing a logographer, though much adopted, was not considered very creditable,[3] and consequently it would be a practical duty of the logographer to suit the speech to the character and position of the speaker as much as possible, in order to avoid arousing suspicion. Accordingly, in Lysias we find that each speech has its individual ethos.

These immaturities are naturally found with the greatest distinctness in the Tetralogies. These speeches were composed by Antiphon as common forms, and it has been conjectured that they formed the illustrative part of a work by him on the theory of rhetoric;[4] but as the existence of such a work is

[1] *εἰκότ.*

[2] By *ethos* is technically meant the impression produced on the hearer by the character of the speaker, as revealed in his speech.

[3] Plato, *Euthyd.* 289D; *Phæd.* 257C, D; and cf. *Rhet. ad Alex.* 36. *τέχνη.*

merely conjecture. the conjecture can hardly be adopted. The Tetralogies, as the name implies, consisted each of four speeches, for they treat of charges of homicide; and at Athens in such cases the prosecution spoke first, the defence replied, the prosecution then rejoined, and, finally, the defence concluded with another speech.

The First Tetralogy is based on the supposition that an Athenian citizen has been found killed, and that another Athenian, against whom the deceased was about to bring a lawsuit, is accused of murdering him. The first speech for the prosecution commences with a warning that the defendant's cunning is so great as to make it difficult to prove a case against him. However, in the first place, the death must have been the result of deliberate murder, for the facts of the case exclude any other supposition. Thieves would have taken the deceased's clothes; time and place show that it could not have been the result of a quarrel: if it had been a drunken fray, his fellow-drinkers would have come forward; and the deceased could not have been killed in mistake for some one else, for his slave also was killed. In the second place, the general probabilities point to the defendant —smarting under previous defeats and dreading still further disgrace in a pending lawsuit—as the man who committed the murder. Finally, the murdered slave recognised him, and before dying stated the fact.

The defendant replies:—If he is so cunning, would he commit a murder of which he was sure to be immediately suspected? However, in the first place, the prosecution has failed to show deliberate murder, for thieves might have been frightened off before they could strip the deceased. But granted it was a case of murder. what could be more probable than that some other enemy of the murdered man committed the murder, knowing suspicion would fall at once on the defendant? In the next place, as to the slave's evidence, the slave might easily be mistaken; and if it is said that the slave was probably not mistaken, against that probability must be set the probability that if the defendant planned the murder he would not run the risk of detection by being present in person. As for the impending lawsuit, the danger from it would be as nothing compared with the danger of committing such a murder. Finally, the defendant appeals to his services to the state.

In its rejoinder, the prosecution reiterates that the case is one of deliberate murder. If the thieves were frightened off, where are the people who frightened them? The attempt, moreover, to inculpate some other enemy of the murdered man,

less endangered and therefore less open to suspicion, fails, because those less in danger would have less motive. In the next place, the slave's evidence remains unshaken; for the probability is that the defendant was alone present, as he thereby made sure that the deed was done, and avoided the danger of being betrayed by an accomplice. As for the danger of committing murder being greater than that from the impending lawsuit, the opposite is the case. The defendant had no chance of evading the lawsuit, but he had a chance of not being brought to trial for the murder. Again, the defendant says that the knowledge that he would be at once suspected was enough to prevent his committing such a murder. But if the fear of being suspected was sufficient to divert him from the attempt, how much more would it deter people with less motive for murder? Finally, his services to the state show his wealth, not his innocence.

The defendant replies, first, that the hypothesis of thieves still holds good, for the passers-by, whose coming frightened off the thieves, would themselves be afraid of being found with two dead bodies. Secondly, the slave's evidence cannot be admitted: he was not tortured, and as his approaching death assured him that he could not be tortured for falsehood, he naturally gave the answer his owners wanted. Finally, the defendant can prove an alibi. (This decisive point is reserved till now, because now the prosecution cannot reply.)

In the Tetralogies, although the case is framed rather to suit the arguments than the arguments the case, Antiphon shows his subtlety and keenness in argument to the best advantage; but these speeches also show forensic oratory in the process of development. Intended as models, they present to our eyes the intermediate step between theory and practice. They naturally contain no exposition of the facts of the case, for they are meant not for a jury, but for the education of Antiphon's pupils, and, stripped of everything which would encumber the argument, they lay before us the method of procedure adopted by a skilful advocate. At the same time, as we have said, in the excessive use of the argument from probability and of generalities, and in the absence of any attempt at individual ethos, they mark an immature stage f forensic oratory.

It is, however, not only in the treatment of the subject-matter that the Tetralogies are tentative: their style also is inferior to the level attained in the speeches delivered in real trials. Antiphon is traditionally regarded as the representative of the severe style of oratory.[1] This style has for its character-

[1] αὐστηρὰ ἁρμονία.

istic dignity and majesty, not life and movement, and it is not periodic. These qualities of the severe style are found to excess in the Tetralogies. In the real speeches, Antiphon, for practical purposes, modified the elevated but stiff style which he felt at liberty to employ in the Tetralogies.

Antiphon is classed by Dionysius of Halicarnassus with Æschylus and Pindar as representative of the "severe" style generally; and Antiphon may be called the Æschylus of Oratory, for the changes which came over oratory subsequently are analogous to those experienced by Tragedy in the hands of Sophocles and Euripides. Moreover, the religious views of Antiphon, being of the same old-fashioned stamp as those of Æschylus, naturally find expression in terms which, appropriate as they were to the ideas intended to be conveyed, were inevitably disappearing from common use in proportion as these ideas themselves were being left behind by the movement of thought.

In this preference, partly instinctive and partly deliberate, for archaisms of language we have one of the elements which go to make up the elevation and dignity of the "severe" style. Amongst other elements may be noticed, so far as the vocabulary of Antiphon is concerned, the use of poetical expressions. This, doubtless, was inevitable while prose was young and the position of poetry was dominant in literature; but in the employment of words and expressions, which, without being poetical, were yet not usual in ordinary life, we have the indication of a conscious endeavour to exalt the language of oratory above that of ordinary of life. Still more unmistakable in this respect is the evidence afforded by the use of words and of stiff combinations of words peculiar to Antiphon himself. The traditional and still powerful influence of poetry, on the other hand, is responsible for the ornate epithets, the accumulation of synonyms, and the use of periphrases.

Leaving the vocabulary of Antiphon, we find that the severe style is conventionally said to be not "periodic," but "running,"[1] being thus opposed to the smooth style,[2] of which Isocrates is the representative. In the "running" style, the principal word or words of the sentence come first, and then there follow the attributes or qualifications of the principal word in a string. Any or all of these dependent segments may be cut off, but the head (so to speak) will still retain its vitality unimpaired. The traditional example of such a style is to be found in the opening words of Herodotus.[3] In the periodic style, however, the

[1] εἰρομένη λέξις. [2] γλαφυρὰ ἁρμονία.

[3] Κροῖσος ἦν Ἀυδὸς μὲν γένος, παῖς δὲ Ἀλυάττεω, τύραννος δὲ ἐθνέων τῶν

principal or independent word does not come first, but some dependent word: thus the beginning of the period presupposes the end, and cannot exist without it.

It would be incorrect to say that Antiphon writes in the "running" style, if by that it were meant that he has no periods. No author writes entirely in the "running" style. Even Herodotus, when he abandons narrative for disquisition on the causes or effects of historical events, naturally strives after periods. Much more does this happen in those parts of Antiphon's speeches which contain the arguments. This, however, is not the only limitation which has to be placed on the statement that Antiphon writes in the "running" style. It is characteristic of the periodic style that the parts of which the periods are made up are balanced with much care: they are either made equal in length, or, if unequal, then the longer is put at the end, so that the weight of the sentence is thrown forward. This balance of the parts of the periods, though specially distinctive of Isocrates, the representative of the smooth style, is not absent from Antiphon. The latter author is perpetually striving after antitheses, and in a long sentence, in which the later clauses (being antithetical and parallel to the earlier clauses) are determined in length and structure by the earlier clauses, the result is a periodic arrangement of the strictest kind. Such antithetical sentences occur so frequently in Antiphon as to produce monotony, and lead not rarely to the insertion of padding solely for the sake of filling out the sentence and completing the rhythm. At the same time, in marked contrast to later writers, Antiphon often quite deliberately makes his sentences as irregular as possible. It is this irregularity, and the absence or misuse of connecting particles, that give to Antiphon's speeches the slow and deliberate movement which is sometimes mere stiffness, but more often impressive and majestic.

Finally, the early stage which Antiphon occupies in the development of oratory is marked by the absence of most of the "figures of speech"[1] and all the "figures of thought."[2] Under the "figures of speech" are included asyndeton, the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive sentences (anaphora), the assonance of whole words

ἐντὸς Ἅλυος ποταμοῦ. Blass puts these words into the periodic style as follows:—*Ἀλυάττου μὲν υἱὸς ἦν Κροῖσος, γένος δὲ Λυδὸς, τῶν ἐντὸς Ἅλυος ποταμοῦ τύραννος ἐθνῶν* (Att. Bered., p. 122).

Note that by a "colon" is technically meant not a complete sentence, but a smaller whole capable of being pronounced in a single breath. Thus the period just given includes three cola marked by the commas.

[1] *σχήματα λέξεως.* [2] *σχήματα διανοίας.*

(parechesis) or of the ends of words (homoioteleuton), questions supposed to be put by the opposite side (hypophora), &c. The "figures of thought" include irony, aposiopesis, feigned perplexity (aporesis), &c.

In this respect, as well as in point of style generally and in the treatment of his subject-matter, Antiphon not only presents to us an early stage of prose and of oratory, but also allows us to see, even in those few works of his which have come down to us, the process of development going on. In the speech "Against a Step-mother on a Charge of Poisoning," if it is genuine, we have Antiphon's style and powers of argument in their most primitive and least developed form.

The speech "On the Murder of Herodes" shows him at his best. Though not periodic in style, the speech is strengthened throughout by the antitheses and parallelisms which, as we have said, result in a periodic arrangement. The language is not so archaic or so highly coloured as in the Tetralogies, for in his real speeches Antiphon feels the necessity laid on the orator of being readily intelligible to his hearers. The arguments are lively, and in general we may say, that while the "Herodes" presents to us the points peculiar to Antiphon and distinctive of the "severe" style in a manner which makes the speech sufficiently characteristic of the author, these points are yet so modified as to meet the practical demands made on an orator.

The speech "On the Choreutes," though inferior in merit to the "Herodes," is later in development. The language approaches more nearly to that of ordinary life, and the speech possesses more life and fire than do the rest. But although the more sparing use of antitheses makes the "Choreutes" less artificial, we miss to a large extent in this speech the stateliness of Antiphon.

In conclusion, the merits of Antiphon must be tested, not by comparison with the orators of later times, but by the standard of his own age. This standard we have given to us in the words of Thucydides, a contemporary and himself the representative in history, as was Antiphon in oratory, of the severe style. Thucydides says of Antiphon that his two merits lay in the power of his ideas and the clearness of his expression. Vivacious or natural his style does not pretend to be, but to the clear and dignified expression of clever arguments he did attain; and it is in the success with which he realised the end which he proposed to himself that the merit of Antiphon as an artist consists.

CHAPTER II.

PRACTICAL ORATORY: ANDOCIDES AND LYSIAS.

THE name of Andocides is associated with the mutilation of the Hermæ. In B.C. 415, when the Sicilian expedition was on the point of sailing, Athens was thrown into a state of indescribable alarm by the mutilation of all the images of Hermes throughout the city. Such a deed could only have been executed by an organised body of men, and must therefore have been the work of one of those secret oligarchical clubs whose object was the overthrow of the democracy. Further, as these oligarchs habitually maintained relations with the enemies of Athens, a concerted attack from without was momentarily expected, though from what quarter no man knew. To the anticipation of these practical and immediate dangers were added in the minds of the Athenians the yet greater calamities to be expected from the wrath of the offended gods. From the age of Homer to the latest times of the Roman Empire, the belief held that if the gods of a city were tempted or driven to go over to the enemy, defeat was inevitable; and it must have been regarded as the purpose of the mutilators to ensure by this insult to the gods the defeat of the Sicilian expedition and the ultimate victory of the Peloponnesian enemy.

The state of suspense in which the Athenians were thus plunged furnished the conditions favourable to the appearance of aspirants after notoriety, and the demand for information created the supply. Informers of various kinds were soon forthcoming with tales calculated to exaggerate the existing alarm, and many innocent persons were inculpated. At length Andocides, when most of the real authors of the mutilation had escaped, and when his father and other innocent relatives were along with himself in danger of death, was prevailed on to reveal the truth. According to his account, the mutilation was the wild exploit of a club of young men—the "Mohocks" of the time—to which he belonged. Whether Andocides himself actually took part in the proceeding is difficult to say, but his revelations, reducing the affair to its proper proportions, restored quiet to the city, and thus for the time defeated the designs of Peisander and other oligarchs, who for purposes of their own were at least fostering the panic.

For thus interfering with the plans of Peisander, Andocides soon paid the penalty; for he was banished by the action of

a decree of Isotimides, ostensibly directed generally against those who had committed and confessed impiety, but really against Andocides solely. Having spent some time in Cyprus as a merchant, and having there rendered services to the democracy of Athens, in 411, unaware of the overthrow of the democracy by the Four Hundred, he returned to Athens, and was lucky to escape from the hands of the tyrants with his life. In 410, having rendered fresh services to Athens, he made another attempt to establish himself in his native city. The speech which he at this time made "on his return" is still extant. It was, however, unsuccessful, and Andocides returned to exile once more, until the amnesty of B.C. 403 restored him to his country.

For some time Andocides lived in peace, discharging expensive "liturgies" and otherwise serving his country; but in B.C. 399, his enemies, reviving the old tales against him, charged him with impiety and with breaking the decree of Isotimides, by which he had originally been banished. In his defence he delivered the speech on the Mysteries, and was acquitted.

In the fourth year of the Corinthian war, B.C. 390, he appears again, and for the last time, to our view. Sent by the Athenians with full powers to negotiate peace with Sparta, he returned nevertheless to Athens, and laid before the people the terms of the Spartans in the extant speech "On the Peace."

Andocides was not a rhetorician, but an orator. He received no technical instruction in rhetoric and had no acquaintance with the theory of speaking. His knowledge of oratory was perfectly empirical, and such as could be picked up by attendance at the Ecclesia. He is generally acknowledged to be the least worthy of the ten orators of the canon; but the fact that he is included at all points to some good qualities in him, and he has at least the interest attaching to an orator who shows the level to which at that time an Athenian of natural but uncultivated eloquence could attain.

Perhaps the most obvious indication of his ignorance of the theory of speaking is his inability to arrange his subject-matter. The distinction between facts and inferences or arguments from facts is an important one, and is marked by such writers as Antiphon or Lysias by assigning distinct parts of the speech to the narrative and to the argument. But of any such distinction Andocides is quite innocent. His facts and his arguments pour out just as they come to mind. Moreover, they continue to pour out as long as any are left. To distinguish between the essential and the non-essential facts of a tale implies professional

skill quite as much as does discrimination in the arrangement of the subject-matter; and the lack of this professional skill has for its result that Antiphon lets his facts run away with him. Parentheses of great length are frequent, and lead to many repetitions and much disorder. Terse Andocides cannot be, and his want of brevity entails want of clearness.

Again, while in the case of Antiphon we saw that the tendency of the technical orator was to develop strength in argument, in Andocides we see that the orator without technical cultivation is unaccustomed to deal with general propositions and arguments. Particulars, however, he can grasp, and thus he is naturally led to convert everything into narrative. But, on the other hand, this tendency to particulars and to copious narrative, though distinct from the artistic brevity and clearness of a Lysias, has by a law of compensation a strength of its own.

In the first place, the tendency is natural and leads to a natural arrangement of the topics of the speech. Next, and this is more important, the details in which Andocides delights give a reality and vividness to his descriptions which constitute his chief claim to rank as an orator. This graphic power is considerably assisted by his practice of introducing dialogue into his speeches. This practice is indeed only another characteristic of the type of mind, or rather of the level of oratory, which luxuriates in particulars and details. But what it lacks in artistic repression it compensates for in vivacity and naturalness. Further, in Andocides, as in most cases, the mind which finds a difficulty in generalisations but delights in the particular has a keen appreciation of the personal. Accordingly we find that Andocides supplements his powers of setting a scene vividly before our eyes with the power, equally graphic, of striking character-drawing.

In the language of Andocides we find the same qualities as in the treatment of his subject-matter. His language is that of ordinary everyday life, used without any straining either after effect or after a definite artistic result. He has not the splendour or the archaisms of Antiphon. Like Antiphon, however, he has words and phrases of a poetical colour, but the method of using them is entirely different in the two orators. By Antiphon they are used with the deliberate object of realising the conception which he had formed of an elevated and magnificent style. In the case of Andocides, they fell from the speaker's lips like his anecdotes and his details, just as they are suggested by the association of ideas, in a manner perfectly natural and quite inartistic; whereas Antiphon's general level

of language is lofty enough to admit of poetical expressions being used without any great discord, and the vocabulary of Andocides is such that these words act as a purple patch.

The style of Andocides is even more loose and sprawling than might have been expected. The absence of a distinctly periodic style in his predecessor, Antiphon, is remedied to a large extent by his frequent use of antitheses and parallelisms; but as Andocides does not make any systematic or regular use even of this form of composition, he is delivered over without hope to clumsiness and long-windedness. Not only do his facts, but his words run away with him. The want of artistic expression and the lack of technical instruction are even more obvious in the style than in the subject-matter of Andocides.

Of the four speeches which have come down to us under the name of Andocides, one, the speech against Alcibiades, is certainly not genuine. Of the other three, the greatest is that "On the Mysteries." In spite of its technical defects, this is a good speech, not merely because it possesses all the good qualities of Andocides which we have mentioned above, but because we feel that the speaker kept touch throughout with his audience. Giving us this impression, the speech possesses a reality which many more artistic productions fail to produce. Specially noticeable in this speech is the ethos. It was the speaker's object to produce a good impression of himself among his hearers, and he poses with great success.

In this last respect the speech "On his Return" is a great contrast to that "On the Mysteries." The ethos is equally marked, but it is of a different kind. The impression produced in the speech "On his Return" is not that of a man whose good conscience assures him that he has nothing to fear, but of a man who depends, and whose hopes are based, on admitting that he relies purely on the good-will of his hearers. In other respects, too, the speech "On his Return" is both less pleasing and less good than that "On the Mysteries." The former is much more artificial than the latter, and for that very reason inferior to it. Andocides is only good when he is natural. The "Return" is brief, and consequently the sentences are more compact, but in other respects the condensation is that of amputation; and Andocides deprived of his details is shorn of his strength. The circumstances under which the speech "On his Return" was delivered did not afford Andocides much hope of success, and he is consequently throughout chilled and depressed. He never reaches the comfortable warmth which is the condition of a good anecdote, and is never sufficiently at his ease to fall into a

reminiscence or quotation from the poets. This does indeed render his style more even, but it deprives it of variety.

The speech "On the Peace," unjustly suspected of not being genuine, is inferior to that "On the Mysteries," but presents all the characteristics of Andocides. It possesses no order or method in the treatment of the subject-matter; it runs mainly to narrative, and abounds in parentheses and ill-constructed sentences. It is vivid and natural, and presents instances of dialogue in the Andocidean manner. It is patched with reminiscences from the poets, and is generally inartistic. Moreover, and this is characteristic of Andocides, the references to history are thoroughly untrustworthy.

Lysias was the son of the Syracusan Cephalos, who had settled as a resident alien at Athens, and in whose house Plato lays the scene of his *Republic*. Lysias himself, although born at Athens and in character wholly Attic, remained always a metic. The year of his birth is uncertain. On the one hand, as he went to Thurii at the age of fifteen, and Thurii was only founded in B.C. 444, he cannot have been born at the earliest before B.C. 459. On the other hand, he was senior to Isocrates, and therefore was born before B.C. 436. From Thurii he was driven out in B.C. 412 by the anti-Athenian party on the failure of the Sicilian expedition. He returned to Athens, and there lived in peace until the time of the Thirty Tyrants. In B.C. 404 the Thirty, veiling their real motive of plunder under political accusations, attacked various wealthy metics, among whom were Lysias and his brother Polemarchos. The latter was executed, but Lysias managed to escape from Athens to Megara. There he rendered great services to the cause of the Athenian democracy, and on the overthrow of the Thirty in B.C. 403 the citizenship was accordingly conferred on him, but the decree, owing to some informality, was, on the motion of a political opponent, nullified. The first thing Lysias did on his return to Athens was to appeal to the law for vengeance for the death of his brother. The speech which he made on this occasion has, in addition to its intrinsic merits, the interest of being the earliest of his extant speeches, and is, further, the only speech recorded to have been delivered by Lysias himself. From this time on he must have worked hard as a logographer, for over two hundred speeches by him were known to antiquity, although only thirty-four speeches, whole or fragmentary, have come down to us. This activity as a logographer was probably rendered necessary for him by the poverty to which the Thirty reduced him. He died at the age of eighty, and of the later years of

his life nothing is known. But no work of his, so far as we know, can be dated after B.C. 380. Of the thirty-four speeches which we possess, the speech for Polystratus (xx.), that against Andocides (vi.), that "To his Companions" (viii.), that "For the Soldier" (ix.), and the Funeral Oration (ii.), must be rejected as spurious. The remainder may be divided into epideictic, deliberative, and forensic speeches. The epideictic speeches are represented by a fragment (quoted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus,[1] Lysias, c. 29) of the Olympic oration. An epideictic speech is one delivered neither in debate nor in a court of law, but, as its name implies, for the sake of showing off the oratorical skill of the speaker. The existence of this class of speeches is an indication of the fact that the literature of Greece was oral. The early Sophists, as Hippias and Gorgias, when they wished to display their skill in the new accomplishment of prose composition, did not attempt to do so by publishing their compositions, but attended the great festivals of Greece and there recited their work. The choice of a subject on which to hang their display was determined by the character of the festivals, and as these were mostly pan-Hellenic, so was the subject of "Olympic," and other speeches of the same kind. Gorgias achieved much fame by his Olympic oration, in which he exhorted the Greeks to unity, and in B.C. 388 Lysias delivered his Olympic oration on the same subject, and with special reference to the need of common Greek action, under the leadership of Sparta, to release Sicily from the tyranny of Dionysius. The deliberative speeches of Lysias are represented by a fragment of one only, entitled a "Plea for the Constitution." This was written by Lysias for some citizen to deliver on an occasion when a proposal was made that only those citizens who were landowners should have the right of voting. The rest of his speeches are forensic.

Like Antiphon, Lysias was a logographer, but, unlike Antiphon, Lysias adapted the character of his speeches to the character of the persons who were to deliver them, and from this difference logically flow the distinctions which differentiate Lysias from his predecessor. The considerations which influ-

[1] Dionysius of Halicarnassus (to be distinguished from Dionysius Thrax, who wrote the first grammar, Dionysius the elder, tyrant of Syracuse, who wrote tragedies, and Dionysius of Samos, who wrote an epic poem in four books entitled Βασσαρικά), born in Halicarnassus B.C. 70, came to Rome about B.C. 30, and there taught rhetoric. Died B.C. 8. His largest work was his Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἀρχαιολογία, in twenty books (of which nine remain), on the history of Rome to the beginning of the Punic wars. He also wrote a number of works on rhetoric.

enced Lysias in the direction of ethos and character-drawing are not hard to conjecture. In the first place, he was an eminently practical man, and his speeches had the business-like object of winning the cause in which they were delivered. The stories of his marvellous success, if not true, yet show the reputation which he had for success, and this success would have been much compromised if he had adhered to the fashion of composing orations which might bring much literary fame to the composer who wrote them, but could not be mistaken for the words of the client who delivered them. To avoid rousing a suspicion that the speaker had consulted a logographer was the first duty of a practical speech-writer.

But, in the next place, Lysias was an artist, and his feeling of proportion and harmony would make him instinctively shrink from the jarring discrepancies which must regularly arise when a logographer delivered to speakers varying in character speeches which never varied in style. Lastly, Lysias was a student of human nature. and, good as he was in argument, he knew perfectly well that men are influenced by other means than reason. He acted implicitly on what Menander formulates explicitly in the words: "It is the character of a speaker, not his speech, which persuades us." Subtly delineating in a favourable light his client's character by means of strokes individually too fine to arouse the suspicion of his hearers, Lysias succeeds in the result in producing a strong feeling in favour of his client. This ethos it is which gained him his practical success and has established his literary fame.

Inasmuch as the ordinary man does not talk in lofty language, and as it was the ordinary man who sought Lysias' services, it is obvious that in the speeches which Lysias puts into his clients' mouths, we cannot expect to find the magnificence of Antiphon or the semi-poetry and florid colouring of Gorgias. Lysias, in fact, is the representative, and, as far as oratory is concerned, he may be said to be the inventor of the plain style.[1]

In his diction is exemplified particularly what is meant by the plain style. The forms of words which he uses belong to the new Attic, and his words themselves belong to the vocabulary of pure Attic. Furthermore, he uses his words in their right and proper sense, observing those shades of meaning and those impalpable associations of ideas which, though they defy definition, determine decidedly whether a word under given circumstances can or cannot be used with correctness and propriety. Poetical words, archaisms, and unusual words are avoided. The

[1] *ἰσχνὸν γένος*, genus tenue.

practice of duplicating a word or idea by means of synonyms, not unfrequently employed for decorative purposes by Antiphon, is used by Lysias only for purposes of pathos. Artistic ornament is unknown, with the exception of antithesis of the various kinds; but antithesis was too firmly ingrained in the oratory of the day for Lysias to escape from it. The few figures of speech and thought which he uses, as asyndeton, polysyndeton, and hypophora, are rather natural than rhetorical; while paromoia [1] (*i.e.* assonances), so far from being artistic, are of essentially popular origin, and characteristic of a rude stage of literature. In expression Lysias is brief, concise, and clear. His sentences are pregnant, and he contrives to say in a few words what in other people would need many words.

As all ornament and splendour is excluded from the plain style, so, too, pathos in the strict sense [2] is not to be attained by it; and partly for the same reason. The cases put into Lysias' hands did not admit either of magnificent language or much appeal to the emotions. Partly, also, the renunciation of magnificence in language involves the renunciation of pathos. The man who either can only or will only use everyday language is thereby precluded from an oratorical appeal to the emotions. On the other hand, so far as a simple recital of the bare facts can touch the feelings, the plain style is capable of pathos, and in Lysias we find this—the pathos of facts. In this respect he is much aided by his power of setting before our eyes the scene which he describes.[3] This is effected not unfrequently by the introduction of some trivial detail, which it is not below the dignity of the plain style to record. Thus, in the speech against Eratosthenes, the scene of the agents of the Thirty plundering the house of Polemarchus is brought clearly before us by the remark that they took the very ear-rings from his wife's ears. To another speech, that on the murder of Eratosthenes, we may refer for a picture of an Athenian interior, which, in its simplicity, reality, and interest, is as vivid as anything in Greek literature.

The power of vividness implies not only observation but truth to nature, and in this Lysias is unsurpassed. It is a quality imperatively demanded by the end at which he is perpetually aiming, viz., to harmonise the speech with the speaker. Lysias studied the character of his clients, and had the power of reproducing that character in his speech. Furthermore, the

[1] Such as *βουλεύειν* and *δουλεύειν*.

[2] "Quo deturbantur animi et concitantur, in quo uno regnat oratio."—Cicero, Or. 37, 128.

[3] Technically called *ἐνάργεια*.



speech is not only one that the man might have delivered, but one that is inspired by the situation. Along with this truth to nature there goes in Lysias an exquisite literary truth. His words are a simple and faithful translation of his thoughts. There is nothing false, ambitious, or vulgar in his plain style. Figurative language and metaphors he avoids, and thus the clearness of his meaning and the transparency of his argument are secured. He is thus also saved from the danger of false taste, to which figurative language is apt to lead. There is nothing strained or over-wrought in his style. For Lysias the right word is quite strong enough.

It is in this lucidity of style that Lysias' highest claim to rank as an orator consists. The most important element in the modern conception of oratory is passion and fire, and it is by outbursts of such a kind that the great oratorical reputations of modern times have been made. Fire is indeed inseparable from, though it is not the whole of the best oratory, and in fire Lysias is wanting. The qualities which go to make the plain style are, in fact, incompatible with passion and fire. For argument vigorous and sober, Lysias' style is adapted, but it is by its very nature excluded from those higher levels and more daring flights of language to which the impassioned orator ascends. The end, however, which Lysias does propose to himself he secures. In clear argument and description he is unsurpassed, and this is a great merit in an orator; for an orator's first duty is to be intelligible. The more difficult a speaker is to follow, the sooner his audience's power of attention is exhausted and the more of his speech is wasted.

As in diction, so too in composition the plain style has its distinguishing characteristics. Generally speaking, there is no effort after rhythm and rounded periods; but it is necessary to add certain qualifications to this general statement. The political speeches of Lysias differ in this respect from the private speeches, and in the same speech the argument will differ from the narrative. The political speeches and the argument are more rounded and rhythmical than the private speeches and the narrative. In the political speeches particularly, two or three periods are united into a larger rhythmical whole, and the larger periods thus formed recur with a regularity which gives a somewhat stiff air to the speech, and are apt to become monotonous. In the narrative of public speeches, however, the sentences are longer and looser, while the narrative of private speeches is decidedly "running" in character, though the grace which characterises it is such as could only come from a writer

who had also composed in periods. In the argument of private speeches there is a certain resemblance to the composition of the political speeches. Two or three periods in the narrower sense are united into a larger whole, but these wholes are relieved by the interposition of more freely constructed clauses. The apparent irregularity thus gained is calculated to allay any suspicion that the speech is not the work of the speaker himself. But, although this subtle art is one of Lysias' characteristic excellences, the end of a sentence, on examination, generally shows to a reader, what perhaps would escape the hearer, that the whole sentence has a unity and an art which the sentence in its earlier development would scarcely lead you to expect.

If we now turn to Lysias' treatment of the subject-matter, his arrangement and division, we shall find that as he lavishes his subtlest art on the composition of the narrative, so too it is in the substance of the narrative that Lysias is strongest. He has the art of telling a story so simply and frankly, and of making his own point of view so intelligible and satisfactory, that when he comes to the argument his work is done. He has won over the judges already without their knowing it. The character of his client has incidentally been painted in such favourable colours that imperceptibly the hearer has been induced to accept it as a strong proof that the cause Lysias pleads is good.

In the argument it is generally accepted that Lysias is not so strong as in the narrative, even though his logical mind and his powers of penetration made him excellent in "invention," technically so termed. It is a criticism as old as Plato[1] that Lysias' arguments are not organically united, but merely agglomerated together. But, in the first place, we see, especially in such a speech as that for Mantitheus, that, viewed as the outcome of the speaker's character, the arguments have an artistic propriety in their relation to each other which approaches to the unity of an organism; and in the next place, when the arguments are really disjointed, this very want of connection, like the looser form of composition adopted in the narrative of the private speeches, is calculated to accord with the professedly inartistic but really artistic character of the speech.

Finally, among the characteristics of Lysias is the grace of his style, which both ancient commentators and modern have recognised as belonging peculiarly to Lysias. To define it has always been impossible, and to feel it is necessarily a matter of more difficulty with modern readers than it was with ancient. In

[1] *Phæd.* 264B-E.

respect of this quality, however, we recognise the work of that reaction of audience on speaker on which the advance of oratory depends. Sculpture and the drama had by the time of Lysias developed to a high degree the natural Athenian feeling for the beautiful in art. The best Greek art is characterised by the easy grace which is the opposite of over-straining and painful effort. When, therefore, a variety of oratory appeared which was distinguished by this grace, it found itself placed under the very conditions calculated to develop it. Had the speeches of Lysias found a less prepared public, they would have deteriorated to its level for lack of the sympathetic reaction which is the life of art.

It is impossible here to say something of all the surviving orations of Lysias, but the leading characteristics of a few of the most interesting speeches may be briefly mentioned. The greatest of his speeches is the one against Eratosthenes (xii.), which Lysias himself delivered. Beyond the personal interest which the speech has for us as giving us some information with regard to the orator himself, and as showing the courage which he must have had to deliver certain passages at such a time, this speech is of the greatest historical interest, as making us, in virtue of its vividness, as it were, actual spectators of the reign of terror instituted by the Thirty Tyrants. The tale of Lysias' own adventures and escape is vivid and exciting. More elevated, more pathetic, and more fiery than his other speeches, though in these respects inferior to later Greek eloquence, this speech stands quite by itself in the orations of Lysias, both as to its character and as to the circumstances under which it was delivered.

Most characteristic of Lysias' power of drawing character is the speech for Mantitheus (xvi.) Mantitheus, an Alcibiades without his faults, is one of the most sympathetic and charming pieces of character-drawing in all Greek literature. The simple self-confidence which led Mantitheus to volunteer for dangerous service in the field, and now presses him to discharge his duties of a citizen in the assembly, his frank contempt for what some people think, and his boyish desire to command the good opinion of others, are all drawn with a genuine delight in youth which is truly Greek.

The speech on the murder of Eratosthenes we have already mentioned as being a vivid picture even for such a master as Lysias. As a sketch of manners, as a source of information about Athenian households, and for dramatic interest as well as literary merit, it is equally striking.

On the so-called defence on a charge of seeking to abolish the democracy (xxv.). which is really a speech on behalf of some one undergoing the scrutiny for some public office, critics are divided. Dobree and Reiske ranked it extremely high; Mr. Jebb[1] is inclined to think it was written in irony. What the speech amounts to is that in politics no man has convictions, but only interests. This view the speaker advances with an air of quiet pity for people who, from no fault of their own, have not the knowledge of the world and the brain-power requisite for grasping this great generalisation. It would seem that those critics rank the speech high who believe that this discovery exhausts the science of politics. But recognising that this axiom is only a half-truth, and a misleading half-truth, we may be content to say nothing more of it than that it was an excellent line of defence, and would win many votes at the present day. as having "no humbug" about it.

The speech against Philon (xxxi.) should be read as a companion piece to the last mentioned. Both speeches were delivered on the occasion of a scrutiny. In both cases the chief objection to the candidate seems to have been that he had done little for, if nothing against, the democracy; and in the two speeches we have Lysias' way of dealing with both sides of the question. It is hard to conceive that Lysias believed in the interest-theory of politics; it is equally hard to conceive that he thought as badly of Philon as he says; and in neither case are we compelled to conceive any such thing.

In the speech for the invalid (xxiv.) we have an illustration of the humour which in a more suppressed form is to be found elsewhere in Lysias. In this speech not only are various passages humorous, but the whole treatment of the subject is comic.

In conclusion, the speech on the property of Aristophanes (xix.) is deservedly famous for the extreme skill with which in it Lysias fights a case full of difficulties. It is an admirable, indeed the best, example of the subtlety with which he approaches a deep-seated prejudice in the minds of the judges and the delicacy with which he handles or rather avoids it.

Lysias, in point of style, steered a middle course between the ordinary everyday language of Andocides and the florid semi-poetical prose of Gorgias. It must not, however, be supposed that this middle style was attained without any intermediate links in the evolution. Lysias had his predecessors in his own particular course. One of these predecessors was Thrasymachus,

[1] A.C.[1] 248.

the Sophist, who has gained unenviable notoriety from the sketch of his character given by Plato in the first book of the *Republic*. He is there represented as a mercenary and somewhat brutal Sophist, who openly avows that the whole of morality is based on the axiom that might is right. He is defeated in argument by Socrates, and even comes to do, what Socrates says he had never seen him do before—blush.[1] Whatever the value of his teaching as a Sophist may have been, he rendered services to Greek prose as a rhetorician. Born probably about B.C. 457, he came to Athens about B.C. 412 and there taught rhetoric—a means of gaining a living apparently not pleasant enough to prevent him from committing suicide, if we may believe Juvenal.[2] For the instruction of his pupils he wrote common-places, proems, &c., and also pattern speeches. It is in the latter rather than in his contributions to the technic of rhetoric that his services to Attic prose lie. We have nothing but insignificant fragments of his speeches left, but ancient critics, such as Aristotle and his pupil Theophrastus, who had his speeches before them, give us sufficient information to enable us to form an idea of the nature of his contributions to the development of Attic oratory. As Gorgias had endeavoured to write in a style intermediate between everyday language and poetry, with the result of keeping too closely to the side of poetry, so Thrasymachus endeavoured to form a style between the prose of Gorgias and the language of ordinary life, with the result of paving the way to a more successful attempt on the part of Lysias. Thrasymachus also first framed periods of a kind adapted to practical oratory, and employed a prose rhythm—based on the pæan—suitable for an orator. In these two respects, as in his avoidance of hiatus, we see that Thrasymachus had before his mind the needs of a speaker, not merely of a writer.

Theodorus and Euenus are two other Sophists who receive from Plato, in the *Phædrus*, treatment little more complimentary than does Thrasymachus in the *Republic*. Both seem to have contributed something to the theory of rhetoric, but of the style of Euenus we know nothing, while that of Theodorus seems to have been closer to that of Gorgias than of Thrasymachus.

[1] Thrasymachus is further characterised by the remark made to him by Herodicus or Prodicus: *δεὶ θρασύμαχον εἶ*.

[2] vii. 203: "Pœnituit multos vanæ sterilisque cathedræ, sicut Thrasymachi probat exitus." To which the Scholiast adds: "Rhetoris apud Athenas, qui suspendio periit." Athenæus, x. 454F., gives an epitaph on him in which his name is ingeniously introduced into a hexameter:—

Τοῦτο μα θῆτα ῥῶ ἄλφα σὰν ὃ μῦ ἄλφα χεῖ οὖ σάν
Πατρὶς Καλχηδών· ἡ δὲ τέχνη σοφίη.

Further, Critias, the infamous member of the Thirty, must be mentioned among the predecessors in his own line of Lysias. We have already mentioned Critias among the dramatists of the decline: his literary activity seems to have been wide, and in oratory he was much more successful than he was in poetry. We have nothing left of his speeches whereby to judge him, but the value set on him by such critics as Phrynichus[1] and Philostratus[2] is so high that he can have been but little inferior to Lysias. Critias is an interesting example of how at this time the conditions of intellectual life at Athens favoured the development of oratory at the expense of the drama. If the attractions of the new world of prose were not, as in his case, strong enough to withdraw a man of ability entirely from poetical composition, still the openings in the field of prose were so much more numerous that he had much greater chance of distinguishing himself there.

CHAPTER III.

EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC AND THE TRANSITION.

On Isocrates critics have passed the most opposite opinions, from Milton, who pays a passing tribute to "the old man eloquent," to Niebuhr, who calls him "a thoroughly miserable and despicable writer," who did indeed create an art, but one which consisted solely of words without a single idea. If, then, we wish to arrive at the truth of the matter, we must first recognise that Isocrates, like most writers, cannot be dismissed in a single sentence. There were various ends at which Isocrates aimed, and consequently there are different standards by which we must test him. The result of one of these tests must not blind us to the result of the rest.

Disposed by his natural inclinations to take part in politics, Isocrates had neither the voice nor the nerve to make a speech in public. Impelled, however, by his faculty for composition to write speeches, even if he could not deliver them, he wrote and circulated political orations. These were in effect political pamphlets, and, to a certain extent, the practice of issuing such pamphlets may be compared to the journalism of the present day. Thus, in the first place, Isocrates appears as a politician,

[1] Grammarian of second century A.D. and a purist in Attic Greek.
[2] Sophist of third century A.D., author of "Lives of the Sophists" and other works.



and judged as a politician he cannot be valued very highly. Political life is concerned more with details than with principles, but for details Isocrates had much the same feeling as philosophy at certain times has had for particulars. Universals in the one case and abstract political propositions in the other had such a lofty and mysterious dignity about them, that no politician or philosopher of this stamp would defile himself by touching details or particulars. A man who imagined that votes could be secured in the assembly or the business of government carried on by means of irrelevant dissertations on the desirability of freedom for the cities of Ionia, was also capable, as was Isocrates, of persuading himself that words could influence a Philip or a Dionysius.

It may be said, however, that, although government is largely a matter of detail, great and leading ideas are indispensable for statesmanship, and that it is precisely in favour of these great conceptions that Isocrates renounces petty details. To a certain extent this is true; but, in the first place, it must be noticed that a statesman must not only possess great ideas, but must also have some notion of how to realise them; and it is just because Isocrates never even puts the question to himself whether his ideals are in any way practicable that he is no statesman.

It is not, however, solely as a political pamphleteer that Isocrates appears before us, nor is the test of statesmanship the only one that has to be applied to him. Although in the earlier years of his life (B.C. 403–393) he was a logographer, and we have still extant six of his speeches thus written, he subsequently entirely repudiated forensic rhetoric, spoke with much contempt of it, and earned his living by teaching. He was, in fact, a Sophist, much as he disliked to be ranked with that useful class of men. On his own showing his object was the same as theirs, although, according to his own perhaps not too impartial verdict, he was as superior to them as, to use a comparison of his own, a Phidias to a doll maker. He gave to his pupils, he says, a more thorough education, and imparted to them much nobler sentiments. As far as we are in a position to check his statements, it would seem that the education he gave was more thorough than that of other Sophists, inasmuch as he proceeded on the sound plan of making his pupils work themselves instead of contenting himself with placing before them his own finished specimens of composition. As to the nobler sentiments which he imparted, he possessed only a very superficial acquaintance with moral philosophy, and perhaps his

claim has its real basis in the pan-Hellenic views which coloured his work.

Isocrates was a fashionable teacher. He takes a pride in having wealthy pupils, and pan-Hellenism was the fashion. The causes which led to this are tolerably clear. The tendency to autonomy, always strong in dividing the Greeks, was in the time of Isocrates gaining fatal strength. At the same time the solvent effects of a higher culture, which had at first worked only on the greater minds—consciously on Euripides, for instance, unconsciously on Aristophanes — were now sinking deeper, and were dissolving the old conceptions of a citizen's duties, even in the minds of those who merely possessed culture and not genius. On the other hand, the more a man of education felt the impossibility of complying with the exacting demands made of old by the state upon its citizens, the more closely he was drawn to the educated men of other states, with whom he had the tie of a common culture. Ineffectual as were Isocrates' pamphlets from a political point of view, they yet circulated amongst the literary classes of every city in Greece. Thus, pan-Hellenism became a mark of culture, and Isocrates puts it well forward as one of the advantages which his method of education offered.

It is a testimony, at any rate, to the success of Isocrates as a teacher, that among his pupils may be found rhetoricians and politicians of distinction. Unfortunately, however, of the historians who were his pupils, Ephorus and Theopompus, and who might have been valuable proofs of his power as a teacher, we do not know enough to affect our estimate of Isocrates in this capacity. Leaving this side of Isocrates' character, in which he appears to greater advantage than he does as a politician, we have now to consider him in his true light as a man of literary style.

Unfortunately for our appreciation of Isocrates' literary merit, we at the present day regard prose composition not as an end in itself, but as a means for conveying ideas, and we are apt to judge a writer by the worth of what he has to say rather than by the way in which he says it. The privilege of paying attention solely to form, with little regard to matter, is now restricted to writers of verse. The idea that a prose writer may rely on the intrinsic beauty of his expression, without any care to convey information or impart conviction, is foreign to our practical mode of thought. Even in that form of modern literature—the novel—which has its end in itself, and has not, as a rule, any ulterior and practical end, the tendency is more and more to lay



stress on the plot or the character-drawing, instead of aiming, as might be expected, at affording the pleasure which results directly from beauty of expression. Without passing any opinion on the character of this tendency—which might be further illustrated by the fact that prose dramas are driving out dramas in verse—we must, to obtain a fair appreciation of Isocrates, insist that he ought not to be judged exclusively from the modern point of view, but should be tested by the success with which he effected what he strove after, and by the services which he rendered to prose literature.

As Antiphon and Lysias had each his own theory of oratory —Antiphon magnificence and Lysias simplicity—the realisation of which constitutes his claim to celebrity, so Isocrates must be judged by the success with which he developed the florid style of rhetoric originated by Gorgias. The rhetoric of Gorgias and Isocrates is epideictic; it aims not at instruction or conviction, but at the display of beautiful prose. Accordingly, we see that when Cicero[1] says of Isocrates' style that it is "pompæ quam pugnæ aptius," or when Quintilian[2] says Isocrates is "palæstræ quam pugnæ magis accommodatus," or, in Mr. Sandy's[3] words, "At the end of our perusal we feel that it is the graceful rhetorician and not the vehement orator, the dexterous fencer and not the bold man of battle, that has engaged our attention," these criticisms are indeed true, but they are not condemnatory of Isocrates. Just as the plain style of Lysias is in its nature and by its definition precluded from stirring appeals to the emotions, so too epideictic oratory aims confessedly at pomp and not at doing battle, at a display of dexterous fencing, and not at bold deeds of arms. It is no condemnation of Lysias or of Isocrates that they do not attain qualities which were incompatible with the theory of oratory which each was concerned in developing.

If now we inquire whether Isocrates realised his ideal, we find that he was successful in his theory of his art. Gorgias in his endeavours to create beautiful prose fell into the mistake of transplanting into prose the beauties of poetry, instead of developing the beauties of prose itself. This is seen in two things: first, he decorated prose with purple patches of poetical expressions, and next he imported into prose the rhythms of poetry. These two sins of taste Isocrates avoided. His diction is pure Attic, in the same sense as is that of Lysias. His vocabulary excludes unusual and poetical words, while at the same time,

[1] *Orat.* 42. [2] *Inst. Or.* X. i. 49.
[3] Isocrates (Rivingtons), p. xvii.

although using almost exclusively the vocabulary of everyday life, he yet, by his manipulation of it, raises it to a literary level above that of ordinary conversation In the next place, instead of borrowing the rhythms of poetry, Isocrates perfected prose rhythm. It is his rhythm which is at once Isocrates' chief characteristic and his great contribution to the prose of all later times and literatures. If to these excellences of Isocrates we add that his full and rounded periods, though massed together in sentences of great volume, are balanced so perfectly and constructed so regularly that the sentence is thoroughly transparent in spite of its luxuriant growth, we then shall have enumerated the qualities which make up the success of Isocrates' style.

Before going on to state what may be said on the other side, we must here notice a remarkable element in the smoothness of Isocrates' composition. Isocrates is the first prose writer who systematically avoids the hiatus which arises when a word ending in a vowel is followed by another beginning with a vowel. Throughout the history of Greek poetry the tendency to avoid hiatus is present. It may be seen in epic and lyric poetry; it becomes stronger in tragedy, and strongest of all in comedy. Its importance for us is that it is an indication, which cannot be mistaken, that Greek poetry was intended for the ears of hearers, not for the eyes of readers. It was because hiatus was unpleasant in speaking that the poets were at pains to avoid it. We now find that when Greek prose was on the point of attaining perfection the same systematic avoidance of hiatus appears; and it is instructive that it is precisely Isocrates, who might be thought to inaugurate a literature designed for a reading public, who pays the greatest attention to a point which appeals only to an audience and not to a reader. The explanation is that, according to the custom of the time, works such as those of Isocrates were read aloud by one critic to a company of others, and Isocrates addressed himself to the most critical and cultivated audiences in Greece. This consideration also explains the attention paid by Isocrates to rhythm, which is of greater importance in a work intended for oral delivery than in one intended for reading.

But Isocrates has the defects of his qualities. The essence of epideictic oratory is the development of the form to the neglect of the matter of a speech, and this neglect is a mistake which inevitably entails its own punishment. The rotundity of Isocrates is often procured only by padding, his regularity becomes mere tautology, his luxuriant sentences identical propositions. Thus padded and bolstered with periphrases and synonyms, his



thought, never vigorous, succumbs altogether. Of his antithesis, his parallel sentences of equal length or similar sound, Mr. Jebb[1] has profoundly said, "The idea of all these three 'figures' is the same—that idea of mechanical balance in which the craving for symmetry is apt to take refuge when it is not guided by a really flexible instinct or by a spiritual sense of fitness and measure."

On the other hand, his arrangement can be praised without the reserve which it is necessary to observe in speaking of his style, and between his arrangement and his style a parallel may to a certain extent be drawn. In both there is the same smooth regularity. The component parts of a speech, as of a sentence, are woven together by him with the greatest skill, and in both the thought is so set before the reader that it may be followed with the greatest ease. The transitions from one part of the speech to the next are effected imperceptibly, whether by means of the antithesis or of the similarity between the concluding thought of the one part and the introductory thought of the next part, or by the logical coherence of the two parts. Again, as in the period, the important word which gives the colour to the period is kept to the end, so the main thesis of the speech, though continually kept in sight, is reserved to the last in such a manner that the interest of the reader, who is kept in a state of expectation throughout, is maintained to the end. Finally, the unity of the speech, attained by this tension and by the skilful way in which the various divisions of the speech are woven together, is diversified by the introduction of digressions which save the uniformity of the speech from degenerating into monotony.

Viewing Isocrates, then, as the representative of epideictic rhetoric,[2] we see that he carried his theory of oratory to its greatest development, and achieved the success which is due to the artist who accomplishes the end at which he aims. At the same time, he does not escape from the defects inherent in the rhetoric of display. But these defects do not constitute the worst charge which can be brought against Isocrates. His want

[1] A.O.[2] 65.

[2] All the works of Isocrates are essentially epideictic, but there are only five of his speeches which are avowedly epideictic in their object or in the circumstances under which they were supposed to be delivered. Of these, we may specially mention the Panegyric: the others are the Panathenaic oration (intended, as its name implies, to be recited at the Panathenaea), which contains the praises of Athens; the Evagoras, a funeral oration; and the Busiris and Encomium of Helen. The last two are criticisms intended to show how these hackneyed subjects ought to be treated for epideictic purposes. (Busiris was a king of Egypt, whose services to mankind were mixed with crimes, and were thus supposed to make a good theme for show orations.)

of "a spiritual sense of fitness and measure" betrays itself not only in the mechanical balance of his sentences and in the looseness of his translation of thoughts into words, but also reveals itself in the fact that he did not consistently adhere to his proper sphere of rhetoric. He is essentially epideictic in his rhetoric, but he was not content to be avowedly what he was in reality. With an affectation thoroughly characteristic of the man, he pretends that his speeches have a practical object. Thus he professes to aim at an end which his rhetoric by its very nature is precluded from attaining, and which he obviously cares very little about. What he really hoped to do was not to persuade Sparta to renounce her supremacy in Greece, or Athens to dismiss her subject states—even Isocrates must have known more about practical politics than to hope for that —but he did hope to establish his fame as a prose writer and to write something worthy of that fame. Yet nothing could have done more to defeat his object or to bring into prominence the inherent weaknesses of epideictic rhetoric than this renunciation of simplicity and directness.

Any attempt to estimate Isocrates as a writer and to strike the balance between the conflicting views which have been held with regard to his merits would be incomplete if it omitted to notice the influence which he exercised on succeeding generations of orators. If Isocrates himself did not reach the highest level of oratory, he at least paved the way for Demosthenes. And although probably, if Demosthenes had had no Isocrates, we should have had a very different Demosthenes, the influence of Isocrates is not to be seen merely in the speeches of Demosthenes. It is in Cicero that Isocrates lives again. In the speeches of Cicero the rhetoric of Isocrates appears with a vigour and a practical purpose which it lacked in Isocrates, and through Cicero Isocrates has influenced the oratory of the world.

The influence of Isocrates, however, was not deferred, but took immediate effect. It is visible in his contemporaries, and even in the rival Sophists of his time. Antisthenes, Alcidamas, Polycrates, Zoilus, and Anaximenes all show the effect which Isocrates' style immediately produced, in the regularity of their sentences and in their avoidance of hiatus, figures, and poetical decoration. Antisthenes was the son of an Athenian citizen by a Thracian slave. He seems to have possessed a wide range of learning, but Aristotle implies that he was uneducated,[1] and Plato,[2] with some raillery, calls him a "late

[1] *Metaph.* ix. 3: οἱ Ἀντισθένειοι καὶ οἱ οὕτως ἀπαίδευτοι.
[2] *Soph.* 251B.



learner."[1] From this it would seem that at Athens, at least, the self-educated man played the same part in the intellectual world as the self-made man in the social world. Even the fragmentary state of our knowledge, however, with regard to Antisthenes cannot conceal the vigour and energy of his character. At first he became a pupil of Gorgias. Then he associated much with such Sophists as Prodicus and Hippias. Then he attached himself with the whole force of his character to Socrates, and became as strongly opposed to his earlier master, Gorgias, as he was now devoted to Socrates. Finally, he became the founder of the Cynic school and author of the tradition that it is necessary to be disagreeable to be good. He attacked Plato fiercely—the slave-woman's son and the Athenian aristocrat would be little likely to agree—and was probably at variance with Aristotle. Theophrastus, however, the pupil of Aristotle, Xenophon, and Theopompus, the historian, all greatly respected his character, in spite of the vanity with which he affected the garb of ostentatious poverty. Possibly, there was also a certain kind of vanity in the acquisition and display of the learning which he, the uneducated man, the son of the slave-woman, had obtained by his own exertions, as also in his scathing denunciations of Alcibiades, the brilliant representative of the aristocracy. The same feeling prompted his choice of a place in which to expound philosophy. A philosopher, who was also an Athenian citizen, might teach in a gymnasium, the Academy, or the Lyceion, where pure-bred Athenians alone had the right of training. Antisthenes would teach in the gymnasium, the Cynosarges, which Athenian pride had set aside for the exercise of bastards. Hence the name of the Cynic philosophy, which in later times false etymology referred to the "doglike" character of those who professed this philosophy. The works of Antisthenes extended to moral philosophy, natural science,

[1] To appreciate this the "late-learner," as depicted by Theophrastus in his "Characters," should be seen. I quote from Mr. Jebb's translation: "Late-learning would seem to mean the pursuit of exercises for which one is too old. The late-learner is one who will study passages for recitation when he is sixty, and break down in repeating them over his wine. . . . At a conjuror's performance he will sit out three or four audiences, trying to learn the songs by heart; and when he is initiated into the rites of Sabazius, he will be eager to acquit himself best in the eyes of the priest. Riding into the country on another's horse, he will practise his horsemanship by the way, and falling, will break his head. . . . He will play at *tableaux vivants* with his footman; and will have matches at archery and javelin-throwing with his children's attendant, whom he exhorts, at the same time, to learn from *him*, as if the other knew nothing about it either. At the bath he will wriggle frequently, as if wrestling, in order that he may appear educated; and when women are near, he will practise dancing-steps, warbling his own accompaniment."

logic, grammar, the criticism of the Homeric poems, and various polemical writings. There has come down to us a pair of speeches, the Ajax and Odysseus, only. These are speeches only in name; the two heroes state their claims to the arms of the dead Achilles, and the object of the composition is to set forth the superiority of intellectual power, which Odysseus is the type of, over stupid strength, of which Ajax is the type. Thus Antisthenes does not profess to set an example of style, as did the rhetoricians, or such a Sophist as Isocrates, nor did he compose these speeches as models of sophistical ingenuity in argument. They rather belong to his moral philosophy, as did his dialogue "Heracles or Midas," in which he expounded his theory of strength and sobriety of character.

Alcidamas, born in Elæa of Æolis, was, like Antisthenes, a pupil of Gorgias, and, like Antisthenes, possessed an encyclopædic knowledge. Unlike Antisthenes, however, he gave instruction in the way usual among the Sophists, and did not achieve any distinction as a philosopher. From other Sophists of his time he was distinguished by giving instruction, not in the theory, but in the art of speaking. His works may have been numerous, but, exclusive of the two speeches which have come down to us under his name, we have only fragments of a few. One of these fragments is important. It occurred in the so-called Messenian speech. This must have formed a pendant to the Archidamus of Isocrates. The latter represents the Spartan, the former the Messenian view of the enfranchisement of the Messenians from the Spartan yoke. In the speech of Alcidamus occurred the words, "Freedom God granted all men; no man has Nature made a slave." This shows that already men of a daring mind were denying the assumptions on which the defence of slavery was based, and is a credit to the Sophist for ever. The two speeches which have come down to us under his name are the Odysseus (in which Odysseus accuses Palamedes of treason) and that on the Sophists. Most modern critics are of opinion that the two speeches are not by the same author, and if either is by Alcidamas, it is that on the Sophists. This speech is a polemic against those Sophists (particularly Isocrates) who teach their pupils only to write speeches, instead of practising them in extempore speeches. Alcidamas brings forward various arguments in support of his attack, such as that a man who is evidently delivering from memory a prepared speech becomes an object of suspicion to his audience; written speeches cannot be remembered entirely; hence improvisation on some points, and consequently unevenness in the total effect; the



memory of the speaker, further, is likely to betray him; and a prepared speech cannot adapt itself to the sudden needs of the moment: it has no more movement than a statue. The opinion of ancient critics was not favourable to the oratory of Alcidamas, and this speech is open to criticism on several points. It has no systematic development in its argument. The style is not that of a practical speech, nor is the expression. The periods, however, are shaped with regularity, and not much below those of Isocrates. The adverse criticism, too, which Aristotle[1] passes on the metaphors of Alcidamas is such as to illustrate the difference between modern taste and that of Aristotle rather than to secure our assent. Thus Aristotle condemns Alcidamas for terming the Odyssey "a mirror of human life." "Wet sweat," however, and similar redundancies, Aristotle justly blames. The speech of Odysseus against Palamedes for treason is weak in matter, but there is nothing in its style to show that it may not have belonged to the time, if it was not the work of Alcidamas.

Polycrates, an Athenian, was also a contemporary of, but a younger man than, Isocrates. Like Alcidamas, he, as a Sophist, professed to give an education in practical speaking. He probably devoted more attention to the matter than the style of his speeches; and his choice of subjects, such as a laudation of Clytemestra, shows the ingenuity and paradoxical nature of his arguments. Other works were laudations of Agamemnon, of a Mouse, of Voting-pebbles,[2] &c. None of his works have been preserved. Most of our knowledge about him comes from the *Busiris* of Isocrates, in which Isocrates criticises the way in which Polycrates treats the story of Busiris. The criticism is severe, and probably deserved.

Zoilus, the famous Homeromastix, who was born B.C. 400, and died B.C. 330, was a pupil of Polycrates. Like Antisthenes, he possessed a wide knowledge of Homer, but he used it to ridicule, not to illuminate his author. He objected to Homer that it was absurd to talk of pigs weeping, as the poet does when Odysseus' companions are turned into swine by Circe. The dogs which Apollo (the plague-god) first destroys, in Iliad i., are small deer for a deity. "Well-greaved companions perished, from

[1] Rhet. iii. 3.

[2] Probably also of salt and of *βομβυλιοί* (which would seem to mean, not bumble-bees, as some have imagined, but a kind of drinking vessel. Schol. to Apoll. Rhod. ii. 569: *βομβύλη εἶδος μελίσσης, καὶ ποτηρίου δὲ εἶδος, ὡς Ἀντισθένης παρὰ δωσιν· ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο στενοτράχηλον.* Pollux, vi. 98 and x. 68, says that it was in the Protrepticon of Antisthenes. *Cf.* also Ath. xi. 784D and xiii. 485A).

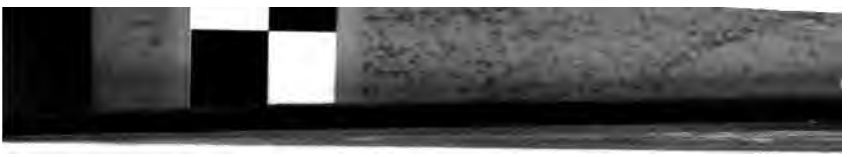
each ship six."[1] "As though at word of command," says Zoilus. In the same strain he wrote a eulogy of Polyphemus. His most serious work was a history from the origin of the gods to the time of Philip. He made no contributions to the advance of style.

Anaximenes, who was born at Lampsacus in B.C. 380, and died B.C. 320, was a pupil of Zoilus. Like his master, he was a Sophist and a rhetorician, and he composed a history of the same period as Zoilus. Amongst his writings we hear of a work on Homer, an encomium of Helen, deliberative speeches, and we have fragments apparently of some work on philosophy. Most interesting, however, is his work on the theory of speaking, the "Rhetoric to Alexander." The Alexander is Alexander the Great, who was a pupil of Anaximenes. The work, doubtless, owes its preservation to the mistake that it was the work of Aristotle. It is, however, unscientific in spirit, and confirms the adverse verdict of ancient critics on Anaximenes. In his ocean of words the drops of sense are few. Compared, however, with the Rhetoric of Aristotle it has the advantage of being a distinctly practical work.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the greatest of orators, we must say a few words on Isæus. The widening rift between the interests of the citizen and the interests of the man, which was at once the condition and the consequence of the approach of Athens' intellectual empire of the world, affected Isæus as it affected Isocrates. That is to say, it enabled both to pursue their vocation without taking part in politics. In the case of Isocrates, indeed, this fact is concealed from us by his pan-Hellenism. But the pan-Hellenism of Isocrates, so far from being a genuine political factor, was merely a literary cloak, which served to conceal his political insignificance. Isæus, on the other hand, had no connection, and did not pretend to have any connection, with politics; and as his speeches, being composed on behalf of others, give us no information with regard to himself, we know nothing about his life. It is uncertain whether he was an Athenian or a metic, and there are stories of his personal connection with Isocrates and Demosthenes. Roughly, his literary career may be dated B.C. 390–350.

The interest of Isæus for us is that he carries on the tradition of practical oratory—whereas Isocrates represents literary rhetoric—and constitutes the transition from Lysias to Demosthenes. In point of diction Isæus resembles Lysias. He avoids strange or poetical words, or words not in ordinary Attic use;

[1] Od. x. 60.



though, so far as there is any difference between the two writers, Lysias writes the purer Attic. The same relation exists between them with respect to the brevity which is regarded as one of Lysias' merits. With regard to composition, we have seen that although Lysias frequently relieves his periods by the insertion of more loosely constructed sentences, still his characteristic combination of two or three periods into a greater whole recurs with a persistence that imparts a certain air of stiffness to his style. Isæus is much more free in his composition, and this difference between the two logographers is important, because it implies something deeper and beyond the mere difference in style.

Well-rounded periods and formal sentences are beautiful, but they are not business-like, and Isæus was a much more thoroughly professional man than Lysias. Those speeches of Isæus which have come down to us relate entirely to testamentary cases. This is partly due to the habit ancient commentators had of arranging the speeches of an orator according to their subject-matter, and partly to the fact that that department in which an orator excelled was most likely to survive, as was the case also with Antiphon, whose extant speeches all relate to cases of homicide. Now, Athenian testamentary law was of a complex nature, and the mere knowledge that Isæus was strong in this branch of the law would be sufficient, even if we had not the speeches themselves to confirm it, to show that Isæus possessed a thorough knowledge of the law generally.

In the practical and professional power resulting from this knowledge of the law lies the difference between Isæus and Lysias. Lysias tells his story with such winning simplicity, that the mere statement of his case is enough to win over the judges to his side. Isæus, although he, too, like Lysias, pays much attention to ethos, continually appeals to the intelligence of his hearers with the confidence of a man whose force of mind and professional knowledge enable him to compel the assent of any one who will follow his argument. This technical mastery,[1] which appears in Isæus side by side with the simpler devices of the "plain" style, not only makes the difference between Isæus and Lysias, but also makes Isæus the forerunner of Demosthenes. The "figures of thought"—feigned perplexity or surprise or questions—which appear rarely in Lysias, more frequently in Isæus, and still more frequently in Demosthenes, are but the form in which this confidence naturally finds expression. Being the outcome of qualities essentially practical rather

[1] δεινότης.

than epideictic, these "figures" both in themselves give a business-like colour to a speech, and, as we started by saying, by breaking up the rounded periods of oratory give a speech the freedom of movement requisite for meeting at every point the argument of an adversary.

Finally, this freedom of movement is further facilitated by another means, which, while on the one hand it differentiates the oratory of Isæus from that of Lysias, and brings it nearer to the perfection of Demosthenes, on the other hand constitutes the resemblance between Isæus and Isocrates, which may either be the origin or a confirmation of the story that makes the former a pupil of the latter orator. In Lysias, a speech, when it is divided, is always divided into the same four divisions: preface, narrative, argument, and epilogue. The division of Isocrates, on the other hand, though tending to the same regularity, is less segmentary and more organic. In Isæus, however, a speech is not divided according to rule or in an invariable manner, but suited to the needs of the individual case. This flexibility of division is both due to and a proof of the more practical quality of Isæus' oratory. A speech dealing in the thorough and argumentative manner of Isæus with abstruse and complex and legal questions, would frequently be impossible to follow if the formal separation of statement from argument were observed. It is, on the contrary, necessary for him to divide his statement into its natural sections, and at the conclusion of each section deal with the argument and proofs pertaining to that section.

With this last instance of the way in which the practical needs of the law-courts, whereby the art of rhetoric was called into existence, continued to determine the development of systematic oratory, we may leave Isæus, and proceed to Demosthenes.

CHAPTER IV.

DEMOSTHENES: FIRST PERIOD.

Not having any pre-existing literature of another nation to impart an unnatural direction to its growth, Greek literature developed freely and on its own lines. The result of this freedom is a simplicity of development which in its main outlines is easy to trace. The conditions which produce and explain



any stage in this evolution are to be found in the previous development of Greek literature itself, and have not to be sought elsewhere. The drama in two of its main departments—the choric and the narrative – presupposes the development of lyric and epic poetry. Oratory also in two of its main departments —the argument and the narrative—implies the previous development of dialectic and history. So too within the history of oratory itself, the highest form is only evolved when the lower forms have completed their development each in its own direction.

In the chapters on Antiphon, Lysias, and Isocrates, we have seen that each of these orators achieved artistic success by realising his own theory of his art. But in each case the concentration of effort necessary for carrying through the new theory was obtained only at the cost of neglecting other qualities equally essential to oratory of the highest kind. The plain style of Lysias is the most perfect vehicle of ethos, but is incompatible with pathos, while the oratory of Antiphon, impressive as it is, makes no attempt at ethos; both styles, however, are eminently adapted for practical purposes, and thus are widely distinguished from the beautiful epideictic of Isocrates. Thus the resources of the art had been ascertained in different directions by different explorers, but it yet remained for one man, bringing to bear all these resources, to unite in himself the excellences of all three styles; and that man was Demosthenes.

But although the history of Greek literature was not influenced in its course by the action of any foreign literature, it was influenced by the social and political history of Greece itself, and in no department could this influence be expected to operate with more effect than in that of oratory. The first attempts of even untutored eloquence are only possible on the condition of political freedom. The level of oratory can only rise as the general culture of society rises; and finally, the greatest oratory demands the greatest themes. In the case of Demosthenes these external conditions co-operated with the internal development of oratory.

In the first place, by the time of Demosthenes, not only had the general culture of the Athenians been considerably elevated by the educational labours of the Sophists, and their natural faculty of artistic criticism developed to an unparalleled extent by the sculptors and dramatists of Pericles' day, but also in the special domain of oratory itself, the law-courts, which had first called oratory as an art into existence, had made the Athenians

every day more exacting judges of an orator's merits. The consciousness of this unsparing criticism was ever present to the orator, whether in the law-court or in the ecclesia, and continually drove him to look more and more carefully to the form as well as to the matter of his speech. Nowhere does this reaction of the audience on the speaker betray itself to the modern reader with more startling effect than in the speeches of Demosthenes and Æschines on the Crown. At a moment when a policy involving the fate of the nation was on trial, in the heat of a conflict entailing the political annihilation of one or other of the combatants, these great orators in their greatest speeches can criticise each others' language and delivery.

Further evidence of the minute criticism to which a speaker's style was at this time subjected, and of the effect which this criticism had on the speaker, is to be found in the care with which Demosthenes polished and revised his speeches. Thus we find that, for instance, our copy of the speech on the Embassy is not open to the objections which Æschines brings against some of its expressions. The explanation is that Demosthenes in revising his speech accepted his opponent's criticisms as just, and corrected his language accordingly. Again, we find that in some of Demosthenes' speeches whole sections occur which neglect the rules that he elsewhere observes in avoiding hiatus; which shows that his practice was to first write out a speech and then go through it again, carefully readjusting those collocations of words which presented a hiatus, though for some reason or other he has not thus corrected these particular sections. Another indication of careful revision is to be found in those passages in which he pretends to anticipate his adversary's arguments. Such passages are really replies to the opposing speech, and have been inserted subsequently in order to make Demosthenes' own speech complete at all points. Finally, the practice of repeating in one speech whole passages which have been previously used in some other speech finds its explanation in the care with which the author originally elaborated those passages. If Demosthenes repeats a passage word for word, it is evidence that he is of opinion the topic treated therein has received the best and most artistic treatment which he can give it, and it is in accordance with the true Greek instinct that he refuses to try to "paint the lily." At the same time, however, it is true that he sometimes himself excuses this repetition on the ground of a change of audience.

These instances may suffice to show how the general culture of society reacted on the oratory of the time, and we may



now consider the action of a different set of external circumstances. With Demosthenes we return to the domain of practical political oratory. As we have explained in a previous chapter, logographers had inducement to circulate their speeches, which served both to advertise their author and to instruct his pupils; but statesmen were prevented from following this example by the fear of being classed with the Sophists. The result is that the typical orators of the canon up to the time of Demosthenes are logographers or the Sophist Isocrates. Demosthenes, however, although a statesman, did publish his speeches. The example of Isocrates as a pamphleteer sufficed to show him that the influence of a speech might be made to extend over a greater area than merely that filled by those who heard the speech, and it was for this practical object that he circulated his speeches. Isocrates, on the other hand, was never more than the literary artist. His themes indeed sound great, but they have no practical meaning, while the subjects of Isæus or Lysias are certainly practical, but not being the highest subjects, do not admit of the highest treatment. The part of Demosthenes, however, was cast in the last act of the drama of Greek freedom. Once more a crisis as great as that of the Persian wars had occurred, and once more a field of action was thrown open to oratory as great as that opened to the eloquence of Themistocles. The events of the time were great, and they give a corresponding elevation to the oratory of the time. Above all, in Demosthenes we have the nobility and grandeur which a share in the struggle that saved, if not the liberties, at any rate the honour of his country was able to impart to the oratory of the patriot.

The internal development of Greek rhetoric, and the external circumstances, social and political, at this time, formed an environment favourable to the growth of the highest oratory; but the environment is not everything. It must have something to environ, and for this something we must look to the character of Demosthenes. Of the enormous care which he bestowed on his speeches we have already seen some instances. To this "capacity for taking pains" we must add what is perhaps but another manifestation of the same power—his strength of character. He started with physical incapacities much greater than those before which Isocrates succumbed. His gesticulation was awkward, his voice weak, and his lisp distressing. But he did not, like Isocrates, surrender to these natural defects. The stories which are told of him in this respect are not incredible; and even if they are not true, they show how much his biogra-

phers were impressed by the strength of his iron will. To cure himself of an awkward trick of shrugging up one shoulder, he practised speaking with a sword so suspended that the peccant shoulder when moved was pierced by it. To gain presence of mind in the face of a tumult he matched his voice against the sea-waves, and to gain clearness of articulation he practised speaking with his mouth full of pebbles. For the purposes of his studies in declamation he constructed an underground chamber, which was still pointed out in Plutarch's time; and in order that he might not be tempted to desert these studies, he would shave half his head. He remained for a month at a time in the underground chamber. The importance which he attached to a good delivery is illustrated by his saying, that of the three things necessary for an orator, the first was delivery, the second delivery, and the third delivery. To a man who complained to him of having been assaulted, he calmly said, "You have not been assaulted." "What!" shrieked the man, "not assaulted!" "Ah!" said Demosthenes, "now you speak like a man who has been assaulted."

That the best teacher of rhetoric is the pen was a fact with which Demosthenes seems to have been acquainted, for he was assiduous in committing to writing any conversation he had heard, or anything else which was likely to be of use. He worked far into the night, and for longer hours than any workman in Athens. It was said that more oil than wine went to the composition of his speeches, for he was a water-drinker. A life of this studious description seems incompatible with the unsupported aspersions sometimes made on his morality. It is true that he committed the crime of wearing comfortable clothing, but our views on luxury are so different from those of the ancient world, that we can scarcely in the present day regard fine linen as a good and sufficient reason for taking away a man's character.

In the following pages it will be impossible to deal with the political side of Demosthenes' life, and yet to abstract the politics from Demosthenes' speeches is more unsatisfactory even than are most attempts to consider the form apart from the matter. Demosthenes is above all things intensely practical; he never sinks into the mere literary artist. He never writes for display; he has only one pre occupation, and that is his subject. As Fénélon said of him, "Tout est dit pour le salut commun, aucun mot n'est pour l'orateur." But we must endeavour to put ourselves at the same purely literary standpoint which Æschines must have occupied when, in his banishment,

he could first read out to his pupils, with the appreciation of an artist, the very speech in which Demosthenes covered him with infamy, and could then remark, "Ah! but you should have heard the beast himself."

Demosthenes, the son of Demosthenes, of the deme Pæania, was born about B.C. 383. His father, who was a weapon manufacturer and possessed considerable wealth, died when Demosthenes was only seven years old. Demosthenes was a weakly child, with an aversion to outdoor sports, and was permitted by his mother to indulge this aversion, so that he grew up in entire ignorance of the gymnasium and the hunting which constituted a large portion of the education of the ordinary young Athenian. This fact is doubly important, as showing both that Demosthenes' want of physical courage was innate, and that he did not even go through the ordinary physical training which might to some extent have remedied the defect.

Demosthenes' guardians, if they were not guilty of fraud, were at least extremely negligent in the discharge of their duties, and Demosthenes, when quite a boy, probably discovered that his inheritance would be much smaller than it ought to have been when it reached him. From this dates the determination, which he stuck to with all the pertinacity of his determined nature, to become an orator in order to seek for himself, and by himself, redress from the law. That he had any lessons from Isocrates is improbable, although it is clear that he must have studied Isocrates' published speeches with care.

From Isæus, however, he did receive instruction. Isæus was a profound and practised lawyer, and Demosthenes was well advised in becoming his pupil; for the prolonged litigation in which he became involved with his guardians was such as to require, on Demosthenes' part, a more than ordinary acquaintance with the law. The power which Demosthenes caught from Isæus of thoroughly grasping a subject, and of then treating it with a freedom which disregarded both technical divisions and artificial deduction, is one which is as conspicuous in his political as in his forensic speeches.

Demosthenes' literary career may be divided into three periods. The first stretches from B.C. 363, the date of his first action against his guardians, to B.C. 359; the second from B.C. 355 to B.C. 341, and the third from B.C. 330 to B.C. 323.

The first period begins in B.C. 363 with the speeches against Aphobus and Onetor. Although Demosthenes was successful in obtaining verdicts against his guardians, his patrimony was for the most part gone beyond recovery, and he found himself

compelled, in B.C. 359, to resort to logography in order to gain a living.

The speeches for the Naval Crown and against Callicles and Spudias, together with the speeches delivered in his litigation with his guardians, make up the total composed by Demosthenes in the first period of his literary career. This period is distinguished from his later style by the characteristics of youth. Demosthenes was only twenty years of age when he delivered his first speech against his guardians, and only twenty-four when he became a logographer. Most characteristic of youth is a tendency to exaggeration. This shows itself to a certain extent in his language, which is sometimes too strong, but more unmistakably in his avoidance of hiatus. In the later periods, although he normally avoids hiatus between two words in the same sentence, he allows it at the end of a colon, just as in tragedy hiatus may be allowed between the end of one line and the beginning of the next. It is, however, the peculiar characteristic of the period, B.C. 363–359, that not even this exception is allowed to occur.

Akin to exaggeration is want of self-control. Demosthenes' nature was excitable even beyond the excitability of the ordinary Southern temperament. The ardour with which he threw himself into everything, and the enthusiasm by which he was liable to be carried away in speaking, are instances of one extreme, that of exaltation; while the other extreme to which his imagination bore him is at any rate illustrated, if it is not proved, by the story that in his flight from the field of Chæronea he roared out "Mercy!" when he was caught by a bramble-bush. This was the nature which he had to keep, and did keep, under control by the force of will. But this control, even in matters artistic, did not come at first or without effort; and whereas in his later speeches he makes extremely sparing use of appeals for compassion, in the speeches against Aphobus there is a marked absence of such self-control.

If exaggeration and want of self-control are youthful faults, imitation is equally characteristic of the immature writer, who, because his own style is as yet unformed, has not the courage to walk his own way, but guides himself by the example of a master. This is what happened in the case of Demosthenes with regard to Isæus. The speeches against Aphobus were modelled on the speech of Isæus on the inheritance of Ciron. Not only are the common-places often identical in both cases, but the treatment of Isæus is imitated by Demosthenes. He does not relegate the narrative into a distinct part of the speech,

but interweaves it with the argument and proofs, and even (in the second speech) with the epilogue. Moreover, he shows the same freedom in recapitulation as his master, and even a greater skill in weaving the various parts of the speech together.

The diffidence which leads to imitation further shows itself in Demosthenes' language. A writer who is not confident in his own powers will not call a trivial thing by its trivial name, and hesitates to quit the safe paths of respectability so far as to use a familiar expression or a vivacious exclamation. In this respect the difference between the first period of Demosthenes and his later styles is marked. In his earlier style he does not know the capacities of his art in this direction, and is so far cut off from the variety, the life and movement of his mature style.

Another concomitant of immaturity is the fact that the feeling of artistic propriety has not yet had sufficient exercise to become a second nature. The feeling is there, for Demosthenes was from the beginning an artist, but it is not yet sufficiently developed. This is most obvious in his inability to resist the temptations of the epideictic style. The stringency of his rules on hiatus in this period, which we have already noticed, is one sure indication of the influence of Isocrates. Another instance is to be seen in his use of epideictic figures, assonance, parallelisms, and antithesis of all kinds. This kind of writing, unsuited as it is to practical deliberate speeches, is still more out of harmony with forensic oratory; and that Demosthenes should have used it in the speeches against Aphobus, although very natural in a young writer, is proof that he was not yet in full possession of the fine feeling which subsequently enabled him to adapt his style to his subject with perfect artistic propriety. It is, however, instructive to notice how soon Demosthenes developed this power. Even the speech on the Naval Crown shows a great advance.

The same mistake and the same early discovery of the mistake is obvious in the structure of the periods of this time. In the speeches against Aphobus, the sentences have the luxuriant length, the regularity, and the balance of Isocrates, and are consequently unsuited to the practical purposes of a court of law. But even in the speech against Onetor an improvement is visible; the speech is lighter and the composition better rounded. In this speech, too, Demosthenes begins to free himself from the influence of Thucydides which is visible in the speeches against Aphobus in a certain stiffness and want of smoothness.

A perfect adjustment of means to ends comes only with ex-

perience, and the lack of this adjustment is further evident in the absence of ethos in the speeches against Aphobus. These speeches are very far from leaving, or attempting to leave, the impression of an inexperienced youth making his first untutored attempts at oratory. A character of this kind imparted to the speeches would have been excellently adapted to secure success, but Demosthenes relies on pathos rather than ethos. So, too, the arguments of these speeches, though excellent in themselves, have not the directness of attack which goes straight to the vulnerable points of the adversary's case, while there is considerable scorn and trampling on the opponent, which is not much to the point.

Finally, in this period we see the seeds of much that was to appear in its complete form only later. Thus, for instance, the rhythm of his later style depends largely on his rule of not allowing three short syllables to occur together. The first operations of his rule are observable in the speeches against Aphobus and Onetor, and are still more visible in the speech on the Naval Crown, but perfection only comes later. The same remark applies to other qualities—his grace and his power, which are present, if not perfect—and we may say of Demosthenes, in this period, his faults were merely those of immaturity. They left him as he grew.

CHAPTER V.

DEMOSTHENES: SECOND PERIOD.

BETWEEN the first period of Demosthenes' literary career, ending B.C. 359, and the second period, commencing B.C. 355, is a space of four years, represented by no speeches, which Demosthenes probably spent in preparing himself, in his characteristically determined and assiduous manner, for his profession. His object in life was political oratory, and logography was for him, beyond a means of living, only a means to his final object. For this reason, and because his private speeches are inferior to his political orations, it is advisable to consider the private speeches first. With regard to these speeches, it is to be noticed that not only do they cease altogether as soon as Demosthenes becomes for the first time a politician of weight, about B.C. 345, but for some time before that they begin to fall off in merit. The more actively he came to participate in politics the less



time and work he could bestow upon private speeches Another effect of the same cause is to be seen in the tendency of these later private speeches to grow more and more rhetorical in quality and less and less forensic.

Between deliberative and forensic oratory the difference in subject is one that necessarily finds expression in a difference of style. In the one case the interests of an individual, in the other case the interests of a nation, are at stake, and to the more important subject a more exalted style and loftier flights of language are adapted. On Demosthenes this difference tells with marked effect. His earnestness and single-minded patriotism find their proper field in political oratory, and give it the irresistible force which is his greatest characteristic. But this very force is too irresistible and too excessive a strain for forensic oratory to bear. Being unable to find an outlet in those higher regions of oratory which are the province of deliberative rhetoric, this force is diverted into the channel of argument. Demosthenes' earnestness does not allow him to be easy unless he is arguing, and here again the difference between deliberative and forensic oratory contributed to exaggerate this fault. The political problems with which an Athenian statesman had to deal were of comparatively simple nature, and neither demanded nor admitted of complex argument. Athenian law, however, was of a much more complicated nature, and gave full scope to Demosthenes' tendency to argumentation. From the literary point of view this tendency is a mistake, because the perpetual argument is too great a strain on the reader's power of attention; and from a practical point of view it is also a fault, because it inspires the distrust which excessive cleverness arouses. Demosthenes' conclusions may be right, but if he had been employed on the other side he would probably have proved his case quite as conclusively.

It is this over-anxiety to prove his point which compels us to rank Demosthenes as a logographer below Lysias or Hyperides. It is not that Demosthenes is incapable of simple and easy narrative. The first of the private speeches of this period, that against Conon, is proof to the contrary. The speech in its simple statement of the assault and battery which gave rise to the action is quite as effective as anything in Lysias, while the language is not only as graceful as that of Lysias, but is powerful to a degree attained only by Demosthenes. Moreover, the ethos is good. The complainant, Ariston, leaves on one the impression of being a thoroughly inoffensive citizen, so inoffensive, indeed, and so orthodoxly respectable, that there is something comic in the

bare supposition that he could possibly have commenced a fight which had for its results that he was carried home, and his "mother rushed out and the women set up such a crying and wailing that some of the neighbours sent to ask what was the matter." [1]

All this is more than worthy of Lysias. But it is isolated among the speeches of Demosthenes. It is not, indeed, the only instance which shows that Demosthenes' touch could be light. In his political orations, certainly, his irony takes its colour from the dominant tone of these speeches, and becomes somewhat grim; but in the private speeches it sometimes becomes bright and quite delightful. One speech, the first against Bœotus (the second is pseudo-Demosthenic), is, as a whole, cast in a lighter vein than is usual with Demosthenes. This speech involves a point of Attic law which has only lately been properly understood.[2] It seems that for a child at Athens to be legitimate, and to exercise the rights of citizenship, it was only necessary that the parents, both being Athenian citizens, should have been formally affianced, and this even if the father was already fully married. In the present case, the complainant, Mantitheus, was the son of the full wife, and the defendant, Bœotus, the son of the half wife. The latter, however, had assumed, in lieu of his proper name, Bœotus, the name Mantitheus, and this forms the subject of the action. A real grievance was involved, for at Athens a man's full legal title consisted of his own name, his father's, and the name of his township. As, then, the titles of the real and the false Mantitheus would in all legal and other documents be precisely the same, inextricable confusion would be the result. "Mantitheus, son of Mantias of Thoricus," is condemned to a fine, and each legal owner of the title says it is the other man who is fined. "Mantitheus, son of Mantias of Thoricus," is appointed by lot to office, and each man says it is he who is appointed, with the result, as the complainant says,[1] that "we shall abuse each other, and the successful talker will get the office." The difficulties of this kind which might ensue are developed in a tone of subdued humour by Demosthenes, and with a fertility of imagination, which is really due to his legal knowledge, but is worthy of the "Comedy of Errors," and the concluding appeal to "you tiresome Bœotus" is conceived in the same light strain.

But if these two speeches, against Conon and against Bœotus, show that Demosthenes was capable of simple narrative, effective

[1] Kennedy's Trans., v. 174. [2] See Buer's "Drei Studien."
[3] Kennedy, 258.

ethos, and delightful humour, his other speeches show equally clearly that he did not often allow himself to give rein to this capacity. The latest of the private orations, that against Eubulides, has not received the orator's finishing touches, and the two which chronologically immediately precede it, those against Pantænetus and Nausimachus, suffer from the fact that the author's heart was in political speaking whilst he was writing them.

The speech for Phormio, which is considered to be Demosthenes' best private oration, shows how completely he trusted to argument rather than to any other means of producing conviction. Humour there is none. Narrative has no independent footing, but is chopped into bits and served up solely for the sake of the argument, and the argument goes on with a mechanical precision which is somewhat deadening. The seriousness of the speech darkens into scorn at times, but never brightens into light or gracefulness. Finally, this argumentation ruins the ethos of the speech. Phormio is made out to be good and Apollodorus bad; but Demosthenes is not content to convey these impressions in the most effective way—that is, indirectly: his technical power,[1] which in this speech is developed to the utmost, is too strong to permit him to do that. He has the case so thoroughly in his own hands, and the law so completely at his finger-ends, that he can come into court and simply demonstrate that Conon is an honourable man and Apollodorus a treacherous and insolent villain. Unfortunately, however, mathematical demonstrations do not appeal to one's emotions, and so the ethos of this speech fails of its object.

It is possible that but for two facts the unsatisfactory nature of the ethos of this speech would have been less patent to us. First, Demosthenes in a later speech reverses the characters of Phormio and Apollodorus as given in his speech for Phormio; and, secondly, we possess the speech. The speech in question is the first against Stephanus, and was composed by Demosthenes for Apollodorus to be used in prosecuting Stephanus (one of Demosthenes' witnesses in the previous trial) for perjury. In the absence of a full knowledge of the facts, this sudden change of front on the part of Demosthenes has seemed so strange that in antiquity it gave rise very naturally to various stories not to the credit of Demosthenes. So strongly has it been felt by modern students of Demosthenes to reflect on the honour of Demosthenes that the speech has been on this ground rejected as not genuine. But the speech is both marked by the

[1] δεινότης.

power of Demosthenes and responds to the finer test of the law of rhythm, so that it must be accepted as genuine. Nor, if we class the other speeches for Apollodorus amongst the pseudo-Demosthenic group, to which they belong, can we accept the explanation that Demosthenes formed an early and lasting connection with Apollodorus, composed many speeches for him, but quarrelled with him, and so delivered the speech for Phormio against him, and then finally became reconciled with him, and again composed a speech, the present one, for him.

Demosthenes, however, was always anxious to divert the theoric fund to military purposes, and it happened that at the time when he composed this speech for Apollodorus, Apollodorus succeeded in persuading the senate that the assembly should have the power of deciding whether the surplus revenues of the state should be devoted to the theoricon or to the war department. From this coincidence it has been conjectured that the speech for Apollodorus against Stephanus was the price Demosthenes paid in order to obtain Apollodorus' support for his political scheme. Whether this explanation be accepted or not, the evidence as we have it is not enough to warrant us in condemning Demosthenes. Further, to return to the purely literary aspect of the question, we may conclude that it was because neither Phormio nor Apollodorus deserved the strong characters which Demosthenes gives them in the speech for Phormio, that in that speech he found it advisable to trust entirely to the technical power of which he was so consummate a master, and which is there developed to the detriment of the ethos.

We now come to the political orations of Demosthenes. These fall naturally into two classes. There are first the deliberative speeches properly so called, the demegories, which comprise both groups of the Philippics, and by which Demosthenes is best known: next the speeches composed by Demosthenes, and sometimes delivered by him, as synegorus for other people. With the latter class, consisting of the speeches against Androtion, Leptines. Timocrates, and Aristocrates, we will begin.

These three speeches, together with that against the law of Leptines, which we shall consider separately, are differentiated from the demegories by the fact that they are not purely political, but are mainly concerned with points of constitutional law. They thus form a genus of speech intermediate in nature between the purely legal character of the private orations and the purely political character of the demegories; and at the same time they make the stepping-stone by which Demosthenes passed f



logography to politics. Marking as they do a period when Demosthenes had as yet established no independent footing in politics, they naturally cease when Demosthenes becomes established as a statesman (*i.e.* at the time of the second group of Philippics).

The difference between these speeches and the demegories does not rest merely on these external differences. There is also a difference of style between them analogous to the difference between the political and the private orations. On the one hand, they do not, like the demegories, treat of the highest subjects of oratory. On the other hand, the orator has the power to appeal to patriotic and allied sentiments, which to the purely forensic orator is comparatively denied. This difference of subject produces, or ought to produce, a corresponding difference in style, and it is one of the great merits of Demosthenes as an artist that he can and does invest each kind of subject with the style which is artistically proper to it. The range of power which enabled Demosthenes to vary his style so completely in this manner is in itself proof that he possessed many excellences. Examination will show that, as a constitutional lawyer, as well as in his private speeches, he attains the highest excellence.

Typical of Demosthenes' constitutional speeches at their best is the speech against the law of Leptines. Aphepsion and Ctesippus wishing to repeal this law, employed respectively Phormio and Demosthenes to speak for them. Phormio opened the case, and Demosthenes, who thus appeared as synegorus in a political case for the first time (B.C. 355), followed with this speech, which is accordingly technically called a deuterology.[1] The law of Leptines abolished once and for ever the exemptions enjoyed by various Athenians from the expensive and burdensome duties of the choregia and other "liturgies." A subject of this kind does not admit of the impassioned flights of eloquence which the approach of a national calamity would demand. On the other hand, it does permit the orator to appeal to the honour, the gratitude, and the good name of the country, and to call for the postponement of niggardly parsimony to moral obligations. To this level of honourable patriotism and political morality Demosthenes keeps the speech all through; and it is its elevation of tone and sentiment which has gained for this speech much of its high reputation. The language in which he clothes

[1] The writer of a deuterology was not expected to deal systematically with the whole of the opponent's case, but exercised his own discretion in the choice of points to dilate upon.

these sentiments, is like them, quiet and unexaggerated throughout. When the moment comes for praising the merits of those who have enjoyed the exemptions in question in the past, his style appropriately becomes somewhat epideictic; but elsewhere his language is never bolder or stronger than the treatment of the subject requires.

Although, however, the ethos is thus successfully developed, the reasoning is by no means neglected. On the contrary, it is close and effective, but it is not thrust unduly forward. The desire to prove his point does not mislead him into reducing everything to an argument; and the same absence of constraint is visible in his freedom of arrangement and his looseness, perhaps even carelessness, of connection. The ease and grace of the speech has caused it to be compared to the work of Lysias in style. But although the similarity is undoubtedly great, the points of difference are important. The art of Lysias consists in writing in a simple easy style, which apparently anybody, certainly the man in whose mouth the speech is put, might use. In the speech of Demosthenes, however, there is no pretence of this kind. The work is a work of art, and is, without attempt at disguise, the work of a practised and skilful orator.

Moreover, the style of Lysias is always graceful, but it is always slender. The oratory of Demosthenes has more flesh on his bones; its forms are fuller and rounder. This is the case even with the speech against the law of Leptines, which in this respect is less developed than the remainder of the set of speeches to which it belongs. Variety of expression, wealth of words, and the use of metaphors all help to give more substance to the speeches against Timocrates (B.C. 353) and Aristocrates (B.C. 352), while in the latter the professional skill of Demosthenes has been employed in further smoothing the transitions from one part of the speech to another.

The demegories fall into two groups—those delivered by Demosthenes before B.C. 349, while he was yet bidding for power, and those delivered when he had become a politician of some consequence (*i.e.* after B.C. 346).

The speeches on the Navy Boards (B.C. 354), for the Megalopolitans (B.C. 353), and on the liberty of the Rhodians (B.C. 350) are the speeches of a young politician trying to bring himself into notice. The speech on the Navy Boards, delivered when Demosthenes was thirty years of age, is practical and sensible. The other two speeches display considerable courage in advocating unpopular views. In style, these three speeches are very similar, though the last is perhaps the most inferior

Their common feature is their Thucydidean character. They are in passages artificial, harsh, difficult, and even obscure.[1] Doubtless the imitation of Thucydides was intentional on the part of Demosthenes, who wished to transfer to his own speeches the brevity, the compression, the force, and the sting of the historian, but had not yet learnt that it is possible to be impressive without being obscure. In later times the influence of Isocrates counteracted that of Thucydides on Demosthenes, and the result is that, while these speeches are more forcible than the speech against the law of Leptines, they are more clumsy than the later demegories. In one respect, however, the influence of Thucydides, which here is so plain, persisted throughout the oratory of Demosthenes. The severe style, of which Thucydides and Antiphon are representatives, trusted much more to the effect of single words than of the sentence; and, that these cardinal words may have the more effect, they are thrown into unusual and emphatic positions. This means of gaining emphasis was one which Demosthenes would never forego; and herein he differs from Lysias, who sacrifices less to emphasis; and still more from Isocrates, whose dominant motive is a clearness and transparency of sentence against which abnormal disposition of words would militate.

The first group of the Philippics further includes the First Philippic (B.C. 351) and the Olynthiacs[2] (B.C. 349). These speeches were designed to waken the Athenians to the danger which Philip's growing power threatened them with, and to arouse them to a sense of the necessity of active measures to meet the danger.[3] Demosthenes, however, was still far from rivalling Eubulus, who then directed the fortunes of Athens, and these orations consequently, like the earlier demegories, shared the fate of the speeches of an unsupported speaker.

The first impression left by these speeches on the reader is their intense earnestness. Whether Demosthenes is stating a danger, exposing the means of resistance, rebuking the indolence of his countrymen, or encouraging them yet to resist, this terrible earnestness is always present. In this respect, the speeches are doubtless a true reflection of the man's character.

[1] *E.g.* on the Naval Board, 4, 5, 13, 26. The construction of the neuter article with the infinitive or with the genitive is Thucydidean.

[2] The proper order of the Olynthiacs is a question belonging rather to the literature of history than to the history of literature, and does not seem capable of any very satisfactory settlement.

[3] The subject-matter of these speeches belongs to Greek history, and consequently the reader is referred for their contents to some historian of Greece.

Munificent towards the state, generous and tender-hearted as he was to his poor relations, Demosthenes, the water-drinker and hard worker, was not an agreeable acquaintance. He was too much concentrated on his work to be social, and we should wrong his memory to imagine him as ever entertaining or amusing.

These speeches and the demegories generally have, then, a distinct and remarkable ethos, but it is not an ethos consciously, and as it were artificially, imparted to them, as in the case of Lysias' speeches. It is the natural and necessary feeling inspired in the reader by a man who is plainly speaking from the very bottom of his heart, who mingles with his work no thought for himself, no wish for aught but for the welfare of his fellow-citizens and the honour of his country.

The earnestness which inspires this confidence in the sincerity, unselfishness and patriotism of Demosthenes is a quality which, easily appreciated, has at all times largely contributed to the fame which he justly enjoys. But, at the same time, it is this very quality which sets to his power limits beyond which he cannot go either in range or in height. Demosthenes' oratory is of the kind which carries you with it or crushes you, but it can hardly be said to soar. Its loftiest height is rather a moral than an oratorical one, an unshaken confidence in the eternal laws of right and wrong. and an elevated trust (supported by argument) in political morality. What concentration and earnestness can attain to is attained, but above this plane his eloquence scarcely rises.

Demosthenes' is not the power to excite to tears or move to laughter, still less to mingle tears and laughter. His earnestness neither needed the one nor allowed of the other. Laughter may be a legitimate relief in modern oratory, as in modern tragedy, but it is no more to be looked for in Demosthenes than in Æschylus. In this respect the great Athenian orator and the great Athenian dramatist may well be compared. The work of each is of simple structure as compared with the complexity of corresponding modern work, and is suffused, or rather overshadowed, by the gloom of impending calamity. In both cases the only relief to this oppressive apprehension is an occasional gleam of humour (*e.g.* the Nurse in Æschylus), which, however, itself is apt to become somewhat grim; as, for instance, when Demosthenes assures the Philippising orators that they are really much indebted to him: if there were no opposition to Philip, they would have nobody to protect them from Philip

Irony,[1] sarcasm, satire, and parody are the forms in which his surcharged feelings find relief. Even thus he often relapses into a bitterness which harmonises, indeed, with the tone of the speech, but evidently troubles instead of relieving the orator himself, and only intensifies instead of lightening the prevailing gloom. Thus he lashes the Athenian craving for news. "News! Why, could there be greater news than a man of Macedonia subduing Athenians and directing the affairs of Greece?"[2] Of their carpet-knights, who were fonder of conducting processions in the market-place at home than war abroad, he says with scorn, "Like puppet-makers, you elect your infantry and cavalry officers for the market-place, not for war."[3] So, too, where he cuttingly remarks that their generals' courage was shown in rather facing the extreme penalty of the law than die in battle.[4] Scorn, indignation, anger, and disdain are the feelings which he evokes to diversify and to give point to his forebodings.

Equally consonant is it with his earnestness that petty graces or ambitious ornament he alike despises. His oratory is clothed in its strength alone. As Fénélon says, "C'est le bon sens qui parle, sans autre ornement que sa force." Without grace his oratory distinctly is not; but it is not the grace of Lysias' slim and slender beauty; it is the grace which accompanies the exercise of perfect strength. Demosthenes has grace, though scarcely graces. His forms, though rounder and fuller, as we have said, than those of Lysias, are made so by the addition of muscle, not of useless flesh. That is to say, his style includes every "figure" known to oratory, and these figures are used never idly or for show, but always to contribute to the force of the speech.

Thus he is very fond of antitheses; not in the sense that he is perpetually using them, but that he uses them as though he loved them, making them very sharp, and bringing them down with tremendous effect; as when he summarises the situation in B.C. 351, "The beginning of this war was to chastise Philip, the end is to protect ourselves against his attacks."[5] For the expression of the stronger emotions alliteration is adapted. It arrests and directs the attention to the words which convey the anger, irony, or emotion, and thereby increases the effect. Poly-

[1] *E.g. Phil.* iii. 66: καλὴν γ' οἱ πολλοὶ νῦν ἀπειλήφασιν Ὠρειτῶν χάρω—καλὴν γ' ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἐρετριέων—καλῶς Ὀλυνθίων ἐφείσατο.

[2] *Phil.* ii. 10 (Kennedy's trans.)

[3] Ib., 26.

[4] Ib., 47.

[5] Ib., 43. Demosthenes' affection for antithesis gives the point to Timocles irony when he describes him as οὐδέπω ποτε Ἀντίθετον εἶπὼν οὐδέν (the *Heroes*, Meineke, *Frag. Com. Med.*, p. 598).

syndeton, drawing out and prolonging the effect of an enumeration, renders it all the more impressive; while paralipsis, *i.e.* the omission of what might be taken into account, gives the impression of fairness and reserved power.[1] Characteristic of Demosthenes, as compared with earlier orators, is his use of anadiplosis, *i.e.* the repetition of a word for emphasis, as, *e.g.* in Shakespeare, "Oh, horrible! oh, horrible! most horrible!"[2] Anaphora[3] and antistrophe[4]—the repetition of a word at the beginning or at the end of successive clauses—asyndeton,[5] apostrophe, feigned objections, questions, exclamations, and aposiopesis are all brought into play by Demosthenes when anything is to be gained by using them.

Before proceeding to consider the second group of Philippics, we must deal with the speech against Midias (written B.C. 349). Demosthenes while discharging his duties as choregus was insulted and assaulted in the theatre by Midias, an ancient enemy. The assembly, which was held in the theatre immediately after the plays to give a preliminary decision on such disputes as might arise out of the plays, decided in Demosthenes' favour, and it was now for Demosthenes to take further legal proceedings. As Demosthenes was at this time just succeeding in his long endeavour to rise into notice as a statesman, it was natural that he should feel it impossible to quietly submit to the affront so publicly and outrageously put upon him. But Midias was a man of wealth, and therefore of power. It was consequently no easy matter, as Demosthenes found, to bring him to justice. Midias managed to delay the trial by instigating various vexatious suits against Demosthenes, and succeeded so far that he gained a delay, which was long enough to make it exceedingly probable that the popular indignation against him had subsided into indifference. The result was that Demosthenes, who for long strenuously refused to accept any mediation, at length saw that, as far as rehabilitating his dignity was concerned, to push the matter to a trial would be quite ineffectual. At the same

[1] In *Phil.* iii. 26, alliteration (of *σ*, conveying anger), polysyndeton (repetition of the *καί*), and paralipsis all occur:—"Ολυνθον μὲν δὴ καὶ Μεθώνην καὶ Ἀπολλωνίαν καὶ δύο καὶ τριάκοντα πόλεις ἐπὶ Θρᾴκης ἑῶ, ἃς ἀνάσας οὕτως ὠμῶς ἀνῄρηκεν.

[2] *E.g. Olyn.* ii. 10: οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν, οὐκ ἔστιν ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι.

[3] *E.g. Ol.* ii. 31: λέγω δὴ κεφάλαιον, πάντας εἰσφέρειν ἀφ' ὅσων ἕκαστος ἔχει τὸ ἴσον· πάντας ἐξιέναι κατὰ μέρος κ.τ.λ.

[4] *E.g. Phil.* i. 27: ταξιάρχους παρ' ὑμῶν. ἱππάρχους παρ' ὑμῶν.

[5] The breathless asyndeton, which has no time for conjunctions, is best known by Cæsar's "Veni, vidi, vici." It may also be used, as by Julian, to point a piece of wit: ἔγνων, ἀνέγνων, κατέγνων.

time the fall of Olynthus necessitated peace, and Demosthenes could not refuse to co-operate for this object with Eubulus, who, moreover, was active in mediating between Demosthenes and Midias. Doubtless, also, the prospect of public employment in negotiating the peace, as well as his patriotism, had some effect in inducing Demosthenes to accept the compromise.

Thus the speech against Midias, though written, was never delivered, and there seem to be no grounds, from the facts of the case, for the more or less absurd imputations which have been cast upon Demosthenes in connection with it. The speech, as we have it, is unfinished in many places, but its power is nevertheless undeniable. Written by Demosthenes while he was yet smarting throughout his sensitive nature under the insult put upon him, this speech is the blow which he returns to his assailant. Every means which his eloquence suggests, which his skill affords him, which his experience had accumulated, is brought into play to give force and weight to his strokes. Although the matter was essentially a personal one, the assault was also an outrage upon the people whose representative Demosthenes was as choregus. This aspect of the case was naturally the one which Demosthenes chose to put upon it, and in his endeavour to do so he assumes the style which in its weight and dignity is characteristic of the demegories. It was not in the eyes of Athenians, and according to the usage of the law-courts of Athens, inconsistent with this object or with this style that Demosthenes should launch forth into a long invective against the life and manners of Midias. But to no orator, however great, is it given to descend to personalities without paying the penalty thereof by degradation to the level of his subject. Therefore, to all times, as to us, the speech against Midias must seem, great as it technically is, below the reputation of Demosthenes

At the age of forty, Demosthenes, supported by the war party, and co-operating with Hyperides, Hegesippus, and others, was now (B.C. 344) for the first time in a position of power, and for the first time a statesman of acknowledged rank. To this period belongs the second group of Philippics, consisting of the speech on the Peace (B.C. 346); the Second Philippic (B.C. 344); the speech on the Chersonese (B.C. 341); and the Third Philippic (B.C. 341). Of the speech on the Peace and the Second Philippic little need be said but that in point of style they belong to this period. The speech on the Chersonese is interesting as being the demegory which is least open to the charge of a want of conclusiveness in its reasoning. Demosthenes' inferiority

elsewhere in this respect is in part doubtless due to his deficiency in method. The earlier orators secured a certain amount of clearness and organisation by means of a formal and artificial division of a speech into such parts as introduction, narrative, argument, and conclusion. These divisions Isæus broke up, or, more strictly speaking, he broke down the division between narrative and argument. Demosthenes followed the example of his master, and left only the introduction and the conclusion untouched. But although he deserted the old arrangement, he introduced nothing to take its place. If he announces a plan at the beginning of a speech, he does not adhere to it; and more often he announces no plan at all. He thus is at liberty to interrupt his argument and then resume it, repeat himself, or fail to resume the argument thus interrupted. That is to say, he has abandoned the artificial method without attaining to a logical arrangement.

Partly also in his want of conclusiveness we see the limits on the intellectual side which were imposed on him by his earnestness. On the emotional side we have seen that his earnestness confines him to scorn, indignation, and other stormy displays appropriate to the presage of calamity. On the intellectual side the concentration which his earnestness leads to gives him a much clearer apprehension of what he wants than of the objections which might be conceivably brought forward against it. He sees things from his own side with perfect distinctness, but he makes little attempt to place himself at the opposite point of view and work from that. On the other hand, concentration gives force. He does not weaken his attack by dividing it, but throws his whole force into pressing his one point. If he sees only his own side of the matter, he sees that all the more clearly; and if he does not render his own position absolutely impregnable, he at least succeeds in making his ideas and his feelings clear to his hearers beyond the possibility of misconception. Finally, from the artistic standpoint, his earnestness and concentration give to his speeches the unity they possess, while his freedom from the restraints of either a logical or an artificial arrangement leaves him at liberty to arrange his matter in accordance with the dictates of his instinct as an artist.

In connection with the subject of arrangement, it may be observed that an oration, like a tragedy, at Athens usually terminated in the simplest and quietest of strains. This practice, which is observed by Demosthenes, is noted as unpractical by Lord Brougham;[1] and undoubtedly, for the purposes of raising

[1] *Works*, vii. 25, 184.



enthusiastic cheering, something more in the nature of a bravura note is required. But to see clearly how utterly impossible any such ending is for Demosthenes, we have only to look at the Third Philippic. This is the greatest and the noblest of all Demosthenes' demegories. It contains passages of the very grandest oratorical power.[1] It is throughout sad and solemn, with the majesty and grandeur of a funeral march. It is the music with which Greek freedom went down into the grave. Could such a speech conclude amid cheers? Nothing more self conscious and unlike Demosthenes, nothing in worse taste or more vulgar could be suggested. There was only one way to worthily end such a speech, and that is the simple way in which Demosthenes ended it.[2]

The speech on the Embassy (B.C. 344) largely resembles the speech against Midias. As a display of technical power, and as a move in the game of politics, it possesses all the merit which Demosthenes, when personally touched, might be expected to show; but otherwise it does not increase our respect for him.[3]

CHAPTER VI.

DEMOSTHENES: THIRD PERIOD—SPEECH ON THE CROWN.

THE interval (B.C. 341–330) between the second and third periods of Demosthenes' literary career is not represented by any of the orations that have come down to us. This is not, of course, because Demosthenes delivered no speeches at that time. On the contrary, he was probably more active as a statesman and an orator at this than at any other time of his life. It was the time of the final struggle which ended on the fatal field of Chæronea (B.C. 338), the death of Philip (B.C. 336), and the unsuccessful attempt of the Spartan Agis to throw off the Macedonian yoke. The reason we have none of the many speeches which Demosthenes made at such a time of activity

[1] *E.g.* the comparison of Philip to a disease, and the wonderful irony of 66 (quoted *in extenso* in a previous note).

[2] The whole of the epilogue consists of these few words, 74: ἐγὼ μὲν δὴ ταῦτα λέγω, ταῦτα γράφω· καὶ οἶμαι καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἐπανορθωθῆναι ἂν τὰ πράγματα τούτων γιγνομένων. εἰ δέ τις ἔχει τούτων βέλτιον, λεγέτω καὶ συμβουλευέτω. ὅ τι δ' ὑμῖν δόξει, τοῦτ', ὦ πάντες θεοί, συνενέγκοι. The doubt and almost despair of Demosthenes breaks out in the ὦ πάντες θεοί.

[3] Some notice of the subject-matter will be found in the chapter on Æschines.

is that his very activity left him no time to publish the speeches which he delivered. Further, as a statesman of established position, he was no longer under the necessity of publishing for the sake of gaining a political footing.

The third period of Demosthenes' style (B.C. 330–323), although the second and third letters, if genuine, belong to this period, is practically represented by the speech on the Crown. In B.C. 336 Ctesiphon proposed in the Boule that a golden crown should be publicly presented to Demosthenes in the theatre at the great Dionysia, in recognition of his services to the state. This would have been in effect a condemnation of the Macedonian party at Athens. If Demosthenes' policy was deserving of the public approval, that of the Macedonian party was thereby publicly condemned. Opposition to the proposal of Ctesiphon was therefore forthcoming from this quarter, and at the head of it was Æschines—the second orator of Athens—who had already come into frequent and violent collision with Demosthenes.

For reasons which are unknown to us, the matter did not come to a trial until B.C. 330, when Æschines indicted Ctesiphon for illegality on three grounds—that to confer a reward on a man whose accounts as a public officer had not been audited was illegal; that to proclaim the reward in the theatre at the Dionysia was illegal; and that it was illegal to make false statements in public documents. As to these three points, the first was undoubtedly perfectly good in law. At the time of the proposal Demosthenes was a treasurer of the Theoricon and a conservator of the walls, and had not rendered account of his office. The second point was probably not good in law. But the most important was the third point. It raised the whole question whether the policy of Demosthenes in encouraging Athens to stand forth as the champion of Greece against Macedonia was a right and good policy or not. The strength of Æschines lay in the first point of his indictment, and in the purely legal aspect of the case; and it is in this part of his speech against Ctesiphon that his argument shows to most advantage. In reply Ctesiphon said probably very little, but gave way to Demosthenes, who followed with the (so-called) speech on the Crown.

Whether we have the speech as Demosthenes delivered it, is a question harder to answer with regard to the speech on the Crown than with regard to any other of Demosthenes' speeches. His deliberative speeches he wrote out before delivering them—his aversion to improvisation is known—and if he chose to



circulate, or merely indeed to retain without destroying his copy, we can understand its coming down to us. His forensic speeches are all speeches for the prosecution, and consequently could be composed before going into court. There is, accordingly, no difficulty in understanding how it is that in the case of these speeches also we have the words as Demosthenes uttered them —allowing, that is, for his subsequent erasures, additions, and corrections. But the case of the speech on the Crown is different. It could not have been taken into court ready written out, for it is a reply, and a pretty close reply, to the speech of Æschines, which Demosthenes would not hear until he got into court. It is evident, then, that at least some of the speech was not written out beforehand. The question arises, how much?

In the first place, all the documents, of whatever kind, quoted, and they are in this case pretty numerous, had to be produced at the preliminary investigation (anacrisis). This shows that the main lines of the speech had been resolved on by Demosthenes before the actual trial, otherwise he would not have known what documents to put in at the anacrisis. In the next place, the very beginning of the speech shows that it was already planned, and that Demosthenes adhered to the plan. Æschines had in his speech[1] demanded that Demosthenes should follow the order in which he had treated the various topics of the trial. Demosthenes having arranged his speech beforehand, naturally says[2] to the court, "You must allow the parties to adopt such order and course of defence as they severally choose and prefer." Again, a little farther on in the speech there occurs a passage which at first sight looks as though the speech were going to be largely extempore, but which really is merely a rhetorical device for concealing the fact that the speech was previously prepared. Demosthenes says,[3] "I shall take the charges in the same order as my adversary, and discuss them all one by one without a single intentional omission." But as a matter of fact, Æschines had no choice as to the order of the charges, and the order was known to Demosthenes before the trial began quite as well as to his opponent. Equally rhetorical is the device of pretending[4] that he enters on a justification of his state policy solely because Æschines first introduced the subject. This was the very matter which was at trial, and which the crowds of visitors from all parts of Greece had come to hear. For six years the trial had hung fire, and Demosthenes had had the whole of that time to think out his defence. In fact, Demosthenes must—as indeed

[1] *In Ctes.* 203.
[2] *De Cor.* 2 (Kennedy).
[3] Ib. 69
[4] Ib. 10.

his speech shows—have known the weak points of his own case as well as Æschines did, and must have known very fairly where to expect each blow. Indeed, he anticipated one blow which Æschines did not deliver. He made sure that, amongst other terms of abuse, Æschines would bring up his nickname, Battalus, and accordingly prepared an effective reply. But Æschines never alluded to the nickname; and accordingly Demosthenes' words now run—not "I, whom you call Battalus," but—"*I*, whom you would call Battalus."[1]

On the whole, then, it seems that the differences between the speech as Demosthenes took it prepared into court, and as he delivered it after hearing and in reply to Æschines' speech, were probably not very considerable, and that there is no difficulty in understanding how it is that we have the speech as delivered by Demosthenes. Undoubtedly both he and Æschines went home and made such additions to or corrections in their arguments as their mutual criticism seemed to them to necessitate. Æschines certainly introduced several such alterations.[2] One of these passages is extremely instructive. Æschines says[3] that he hears Demosthenes is going to compare him, in an uncomplimentary sense, to the Sirens, and retorts on Demosthenes with a *tu quoque*. This of course means that Demosthenes did in his speech on the Crown compare Æschines to the Sirens, and that Æschines when the trial was over inserted this retort. But in our copy of the speech on the Crown no such comparison is to be found. Evidently, therefore, Demosthenes, in making the final copy of his speech for circulation, omitted this passage; but of this omission Æschines, who was replying to the speech as spoken in court, was unaware. If Æschines had been answering the circulated copy of the *De Corona*, there would have been no need for him to reply to a passage which did not occur in it. From this it would seem, then, that the other passages of Æschines which imply acquaintance with Demosthenes' speech are good evidence that the sections of Demosthenes against which they are directed were really delivered in court.

It has been said[4] that the sources of Demosthenes' power as an orator are three: his lofty morality, his intellectual superiority, and the magical power of his language. We will begin, therefore, our criticism of the speech on the Crown with an examination of the language. The variety of effects which Demosthenes is capable of producing is due, in the first place, to his extensive command of language. In this respect, even in

[1] Schæfer, *Demosthenes*, B. 80.
[2] *E.g.* in *Ctes.* 228. [3] Ib. 229.
[4] Westermann, *Geschichte der Beredsamkeit*, i. 109.

his other speeches, the range of Demosthenes is much wider than that of any previous orator; and in this, his greatest speech, he shows a fertility and copiousness which even he had never before displayed. Antiphon, writing in the severe style, was limited in his choice of words and expressions by the limited object which he had in view, namely, to produce an effect of magnificence and grandeur. Lysias, writing in the plain style, was equally limited in his resources, although his theory of the art—that it should confine itself to such modes of expression as were within the reach of the ordinary man—directed his labours to a totally different part of the field to that which Antiphon had been labouring. Isocrates, again, who was no practical orator, indulged in an academic fastidiousness of diction which limited his vocabulary in a distinctly artificial manner.

Demosthenes, however, fills all these fields. He not only avails himself freely of the magnificence of Antiphon, the simplicity of Lysias, or the precision of Isocrates, as occasion requires; but he has no hesitation in borrowing the "by Zeus!"[1] of ordinary, not to say vulgar life. Nor has he any prudery to prevent him calling a plain thing by its plain name. His innate sense of power enabled him to deal freely with what others touched timidly. The level of culture at which a stock of proverbs constitutes a man's education is that of Sancho Panza; and consequently, proverbs, however apt, are frequently avoided by writers as wanting in dignity. But Demosthenes, if he wants a proverb, uses it.[2] So, too, if comedy can be laid under contribution to yield a means of ridicule, Demosthenes goes unhesitatingly to comedy.[3] If the language as it is does not afford

[1] Demosthenes uses not only *νὴ τὸν Δία*, but the form *νὴ Δία*, which excessive usage had worn it down to. An equally lively and vulgar expression is *ὦ ταν*. This expression was originally respectable (*cf.* *ὦ ἔτα*, Alcæus in *Athen.* 481A). Sophocles puts it into a messenger's mouth, *O. T.* 1145. An interesting indication that Demosthenes did not confine himself with absolute strictness to "pure" Attic is to be found in his use of the preposition *σύν*. In Xenophon, who has no claims to "purity," *σύν* is used more frequently than *μετά* (the proportion is *σύν* used 556 times, *μετά* 275 times). In Homer *σύν* is used freely. In Herodotus *μετά* begins to seriously rival *σύν* (*σύν* 72, *μετά* 63). In Attic Greek the "law of parcimony," which, as Mr. Rutherford in his "New Phrynichus" has shown, would not tolerate if it could not differentiate synonyms, practically killed *σύν*. In Plato we have *σύν* 87, *μετά* 586; in Demosthenes *σύν* 12 (15), *μετά* 346; in Lysias *σύν* 2, *μετά* 102; and in Isocrates, Lycurgus, and Hyperides *σύν* does not occur, *μετά* is in undisturbed possession of the field. Why *μετά* killed *σύν* we do not know. See T. Mommsen, Progr. Frankfurt, 1847.

[2] *De Cor.* 24, 72, 263. In the demegories, however, he never does more than allude to proverbs.

[3] Ib. 242, 261; the diminutives are from comedy.

anything strong enough to express his feelings of contempt, he coins a word which shall be strong enough.[1] In the other direction, for the expression of lofty and solemn sentiments he has at command adequate words. Thus he employs adjurations,[2] unusual words,[3] and stately phrases of a tragic cast.[4]

Isocrates purposely avoided metaphors, and Lysias instinctively shunned figurative language. In both cases clearness of thought was thus gained. Demosthenes, however, is a thinker powerful enough to master his language, and is never mastered by it; and he accordingly adds to the variety and charm of his style by a free use of similes and metaphors. His similes have the widest range, and are taken with equal freedom from commerce,[5] building,[6] war and athletics,[7] and disease.[8] More seldom and more poetical are those from sea and sky.[9] His metaphors are partly nautical[10] (as might be expected from the orator of a maritime nation), but still more largely from that which gave a young Athenian much of his education and occupied a good deal of the thoughts of all Athenians, the gymnasium. And within this range we have metaphors from running,[11] wrestling,[12] and boxing,[13] as well as from the decision of the judges[14] and the offering of prizes.[15]

The power of Demosthenes' language, however, cannot be accounted for solely by the wealth of his vocabulary or his variety of expression. Words appeal as well to the ear as to the mind, and, above all, in oratory a sentence must have its melody as well as its meaning. As, however, in music, no more precise definition of melody can be found than that it is a pleasing combination of musical sounds, so of the melody of prose we can say little more than that it is the pleasing combination of spoken sounds, and the ultimate test of melody must be made by the ear. This, in the case of Demosthenes, is for us, with our defective knowledge of the pronunciation of Greek,

[1] Ib. 139, 209, 242; the compounds are Demosthenes' coinage.
[2] Adjurations are unknown to Isæus and Andocides, and are rare in other orators, but numerous in Demosthenes. We have, *e.g.* the Homeric *νὴ τὸν Διά καὶ τὸν Ἀπόλλω καὶ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν*; also *νὴ τὸν Ἡρακλεά, νὴ τὴν Δήμητρα*. For other forms see *De Cor.* 1, 8, 141, 158, 199, 201, 261, 294, 307, 324, 385.
[3] *De Cor.* 195, 199, 204, 207. [4] Ib. 141, 270.
[5] *E.g. Olyn.* i. 11, 15; *Peace* 12; *Phil.* iii. 38; *De Cor.* 297.
[6] *E.g. Olyn.* ii. 10; *Phil.* i. 26. [7] *E.g. Olyn.* iii. 17; *Phil.* iii. 17, i. 40.
[8] *E.g. Ol.* ii. 21, iii. 33; *Phil.* iii. 29; *De Cor.* 243.
[9] *E.g. Phil.* iii. 69, *De Cor.* 153 (celebrated), 194, 214, 308 (these and the following references from Rehdantz). [10] *E.g. ὑποστειλάμενος, Phil.* i. 51.
[11] *E.g. παρέρχεται, De Cor.* 7. [12] *E.g. ὑποσκελίζειν*, ib. 138.
[13] Developed into a simile, *Phil.* i. 40. [14] *E.g. βραβεύουσι, Ol.* iii. 27.
[15] *E.g. ἐν μέσῳ κεῖται, Phil.* i. 5.

obviously a matter of difficulty. Hence it is advisable to rely on the ancient theories of prose rhythm.

As poetry falls into verses, so prose falls into divisions called cola, which should, on the average, be the length of a hexameter, *i.e.* about fifteen syllables. A colon is, of course, rarely this precise length, but is generally longer or shorter, and not unfrequently much longer or shorter. The next thing to understand with regard to the colon is how it is related to what we understand by a sentence. Several cola together make a period, and a period is always a sentence in our sense of the word, though a sentence is not always a period, for a sentence may consist of a single colon. Thus, "I have no ambition" is a colon. It is also a sentence. But it is not a period. On the other hand, "I have no ambition, unless it be the ambition to break your chain and contemplate your glory," is a sentence and is also a period, consisting of two cola, the first of which is, "I have no ambition." A colon, therefore, is a complete thought, or a portion complete in itself of a thought.

A colon of prose is, like a verse of poetry, divisible into metrical feet; but it is a mark of bad taste or of negligence if a prose writer falls into verse,[1] for prose and poetry are different things. The metre of poetry is definite and recurrent, while that of prose is not at all, or in a less degree, definite and recurrent. But although the metre of prose must not be identical with, it may suggest that of poetry. The end of a verse may be used at the beginning of a colon, or the beginning at the end. Moreover, the more unusual the verse suggested, the more closely the colon may be made to resemble the metre of the verse.[2]

Demosthenes shows an advance on previous orators in respect of prose rhythm. He systematically avoids more than two short syllables at a time, and in the rhythmical termination of a sentence he displays much variety. As a rule, a long syllable followed by short ones has a diminuendo effect, while short syllables followed by long ones have a crescendo effect, and consequently the latter kind of rhythm is naturally adapted for the termination of a sentence. Isocrates, on this principle, usually concludes with two or more long syllables. Demosthenes, how-

[1] A great number of iambics may be found in Demosthenes; but inasmuch as the iambic does not in any case coincide with the colon, but is divided between two cola, it is really broken up by the pause between the two cola, and is thus no violation of the rule that verse should not occur in prose.

[2] *E.g.* the anapæstic dimeter or a logaœdic.

ever, without lessening the impressive effect of a termination of this kind, avoids the monotony of too many long syllables.[1] Further, there are to be found in Demosthenes traces of recurrent rhythm, *i.e.* cases in which the cola of a period correspond metrically to each other. Such cases of rhythm naturally do not pervade a speech, but are to be looked for only in passages which, for some reason or other, are carefully and deliberately elaborated in this respect.

Demosthenes' intellectual superiority, the second source of his oratorical power, is most manifest when he is compared with any other man of his own day. He saw the danger with which Macedon threatened Greece before any other Athenian citizen, and when the news with regard to Elatea wakened Athens to the truth, there is no doubt that Demosthenes was, as he himself says, the only man who had any reasoned ideas on the measures which it was necessary to take. Again, the intellectual power of Demosthenes as an orator is shown by the skill with which, at the age of twenty, he carried on the complicated litigation against his guardians. This continued throughout his career, and is strongly illustrated by the speech on the Crown, which illustrates the mental grasp which enabled him to successfully handle a large mass of facts; and still more clearly do we see from the speeches for Phormio and against Stephanus (I.). arguing. as they practically do, the same case from opposite sides, how thoroughly Demosthenes could understand a case. The restless energy of the man may be seen in almost any of his speeches, for in all the stream of argument is all-pervading and perpetual.

Whether, however, the intellectual superiority of Demosthenes is equally great when he is compared with modern orators is another question. It is said on the one hand, that modern statesmen, having to deal with problems of much greater complexity than any which were propounded to the orators of Athens, are educated into treating these complex problems with corresponding thoroughness in their speeches; while Athenian orators for want of this education attained to less power of treatment. On the other hand, it is said that Demosthenes, if he did not attain certainty of demonstration, at least succeeds in conveying to the minds of his hearers the conclu-

[1] The epitritic ending of the Second Olynthiac is a favourite one—*βέλτιον ἅπαντα τῶν ὅλων πραγμάτων ὑμῖν ἐχόντων*. Demosthenes, indeed, uses every possible mode of termination, but the choriambus and the fourth paeon ⏑⏑—) are most frequent.

sions he wished them to adopt and the reasons for adopting them, with a clearness not to be gainsaid or surpassed. He attacks in column and not in line. Both views may be true. His attack is irresistible at the point on which he directs it; but he does not defeat the whole of the enemy's line. There remain difficulties and objections which he has not overthrown, because he has not attacked them. In this respect therefore —as compared with the comprehensive power shown in modern expositions of policy —the intellectual superiority of Demosthenes needs qualification.

As to the morality of Demosthenes there can be no doubt; indeed the tendency is to make too much of it. Demosthenes was not the only just man in the Athens of his day. We are apt to be so much impressed by his gloomy pictures of Athens as a city full of people who set their hearts on unworthy objects and gave themselves up to those wicked orators who lulled them into false security and ignoble ease, that we come to think of Demosthenes as a voice crying in the wilderness of selfishness and corruption. But although it is true that there was an increasing dearth of earnest patriotism at Athens, it is equally true that there were many other public men besides Demosthenes who scorned Philip's gold and Alexander's threats. Premising, then, that Demosthenes had not a monopoly of patriotism and was not the sole purveyor of political morality to the Athenians of his time, we may fully recognise that his speeches are uniformly inspired with a conviction of the paramount duty of doing what is right. Many of the finest passages of the Philippics contain the sentiment that the wicked cannot prosper, expressed in accents of real feeling, and with a force of conviction that cannot be resisted.

Above all, and most appropriately, the speech on the Crown is marked by the peace of mind which belongs to the man who has known the right and done it. This speech has much in it that offends, and justly offends, modern taste. Like the speech against Midias and that on the Embassy, it has at first sight a narrow and personal basis. Like those speeches, it is besmirched with abuse, personalities, and coarseness. From the very nature of its subject it was impossible that it should be conceived or delivered in the spirit of pure patriotism and self-effacement which is characteristic of the Philippics. Of those speeches it could be truly said, "Tout est dit pour le salut commun, aucun mot n'est pour l'orateur." But from a speech delivered under the conditions of that on the Crown we can at most hope that the common safety will not come off worse than the orator.

In spite, however, of all these inevitable defects, the speech is the greatest which Demosthenes ever made, and this is partly because the laudation which it contains of himself and the country is tolerable, and even laudable, as it was pronounced in the hour of misfortune, which he shared with the country, and not at a moment of triumph. Principally, however, it is great because the speech is that of a man who followed honour and the right steadfastly, although they led to failure, and who in spite of adversity has not departed from his faith in duty.

Demosthenes' patriotism and political morality has always been the subject of eulogy, but his private character have not been so uniformly fortunate. Whether he was or was not loose in his private life is a question which can be hardly answered in the negative, solely on the ground of his notorious habits of hard work; nor can we say that the charge is improbable, certainly not impossible, and this is all we need say. His physical feebleness and cowardice may be admitted. He fled from Chæronea, like many other Athenians; and from his earliest years he showed a constitutional aversion to physical training and hardships. That his cowardice, however, was physical, not moral, we have only to look at his life to see. His struggles with his guardians betray no weak-heartedness. His earliest demegories took up the unpopular and righteous side of the questions he dealt with; and throughout his subsequent political life he was mainly engaged in telling the people, from whose approval alone he could expect any reward, unpleasant truths.

Finally, there remains the charge of corruption. He was said to have accepted secret presents of gold from the great king; but a charge of that kind was easily made, and, if believed at all, was likely to be damaging, though hard or impossible to prove or disprove, and may be disregarded. Demosthenes is more seriously implicated in the Harpalus affair. When, in B.C. 324, Harpalus, Alexander's treasurer, having absconded with 700 talents of his master's money, had received refuge in Athens, the Athenians were alarmed by an imperative demand for his surrender. Harpalus certainly made a free use of bribes, and Demosthenes' conduct gave rise to a suspicion that he too had been bribed. In the first place, he spoke against surrendering Harpalus. In the next, he connived at the escape of Harpalus from Athens; and thirdly, when at this time Alexander demanded to be included amongst the gods of the Athenians, Demosthenes advised compliance with the somewhat impious request. The result of this suspicious behaviour was a preliminary investigation by the Areopagus, which named Demos-



thenes as one of the orators bribed by Harpalus. The prosecution which followed was conducted by Hyperides, and ended in the condemnation of Demosthenes, who thereupon fled into exile.

In discussing the Harpalus affair, it is advisable to begin by stating that the decision of the Areopagus and the result of the trial cannot be regarded as proving anything. The people were in a state of panic, such that their only idea was to condemn somebody, while the Areopagus, if not incapable, was not adapted to ascertaining the truth. We are then reduced to examining the conduct of Demosthenes, to see whether it is capable of being explained on no better hypothesis than that of bribery. His behaviour was certainly tortuous; but it is clear that he had no intention from the first of fighting Alexander, else he would not have taken the steps he did for making Harpalus' money—the very nerves of war—unavailable by making the state responsible for it. On the other hand, it is equally clear that he had no intention of surrendering Harpalus, else he would not have connived at his escape. It seems, therefore, that, with the wiliness supposed to be characteristic of the Greek, he endeavoured to steer a middle course between the danger of affronting Alexander and the national disgrace of surrendering Harpalus. This he might think he could succeed in if Harpalus happened to escape and leave his money behind. The Athenians would have the sufficient reason that Harpalus was no longer in their hands to allege for not surrendering him; while they might hope to soothe any resentment on the part of Alexander by returning the money. If so, the plan was spoiled by the deficiency in Harpalus' accounts. The Athenians found they had neither the money nor the person of Harpalus wherewith to satisfy Alexander. Hence came the necessity of submitting—and to Demosthenes it was probably a hard necessity—to Alexander's demand to be worshipped as a god.

The conduct of Demosthenes is then quite intelligible without supposing that he was bribed by Harpalus. This is all we can say. In all probability, however, Demosthenes has himself to thank for any suspicions which may still attach to him. He has dwelt so powerfully upon the universal corruption among his contemporaries, and has been taken so literally at his word, that it is not strange that there should be doubts whether, if bribery was so common, even he was altogether spotless.

In exile he continued to exert himself for the cause of Greek independence. When recalled, Demosthenes, to escape from Antipater, committed suicide at Ægina in B.C. 322.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONTEMPORARIES OF DEMOSTHENES: THE ANTI-MACEDONIAN PARTY.

We have said that it would be a mistake to imagine that Demosthenes was the only patriot amongst the orators of his time in Athens. In addition to Hyperides,[1] Lycurgus, and Hegesippus, of whom we shall have to say something in this chapter, we can quote[2] other orators who, like Demosthenes, offered a worthy resistance to the Macedonian power, such as Polyeuctus, Sphettus, Diophantus, Mœrocles, whose surrender was demanded by Alexander, Aristophon, and Demochares, the nephew of Demosthenes. Further, though less important, there are Callisthenes, Democrates, Ephialtes, Damon, Timarchus, Hegesander, Himeræus, Demon, Aristonicus, and Clitomachus.

That there should be differences of opinion amongst such a numerous party on the precise means by which their common object was to be obtained is not surprising; and we find that here, as elsewhere in politics, there was an extreme and a moderate party. Of the former section, which advocated, even after the battle of Chæronea, desperate and uncompromising resistance to the Macedonians, the foremost orator was Hyperides. The division between the extreme and moderate sections of the anti-Macedonian party came to a violent breach in consequence of the Harpalus affair. Demosthenes, who then had the guidance of affairs, was averse to breaking into open opposition to Alexander, and accordingly brought forward a proposal which, by making the state responsible to Alexander for the money Harpalus had absconded with to Athens, effectually precluded any possibility of using this money for the purpose of war against Alexander. Further, when his scheme for appeasing Alexander and yet preserving the dignity of Athens broke down, Demosthenes was reduced to advocate the claim of Alexander to be included among the Athenian gods. This piece of servility alone was needed to complete the exasperation of the extreme party, whose desire was from the first for a straightforward policy of open war, which might have been desperate, but would have been honourable. This policy had now been rendered completely impossible by the line of action taken by

[1] The proper spelling is Hypereides.
[2] See Westermann, *G. B. I.* 93.



Demosthenes, but he might be prevented from further mischief, and accordingly we find Hyperides acting as his accuser in the trial which ended in Demosthenes' flight.

When Hyperides was born is uncertain, but as he was delivering political speeches[1] in B.C. 360, he can hardly have been younger than Demosthenes, who was born B.C. 383, and delivered his first speech in B.C. 363. He was probably a pupil of Isocrates (though he bears no deep marks of his influence), but not, as is sometimes said, of Plato. Hyperides, as he staked his life for his country, so was at all times ready to spend his money in the service of the country. In B.C. 350 he contributed towards the expedition to Eubœa against Philip, spontaneously, two fully equipped triremes; and ten years later he not only discharged the expensive duties of choregus in a magnificent manner, but, disdaining to avail himself of the immunity allowed by law, also contributed his share to the expedition against Byzantium. And he did not limit his patriotism to merely giving his money, but was always ready to give his services, and especially at times of despair and danger. After the fall of Elatea, and again after the battle of Chæronea, he was foremost in his endeavours to organise every possible kind of resistance. In the absence of Demosthenes, after the Harpalus affair, Hyperides, together with Leosthenes (on whom he subsequently pronounced the Funeral Oration which has come down to us), commenced and carried on the Lamian war. Finally, after the defeat at Crannon, he was captured and killed with circumstances of cruelty by Antipater in B.C. 322.

Whether Hyperides did wisely for the state in attacking Demosthenes over the Harpalus affair is a question we need not here discuss, but his policy of open and honourable action against Alexander wins our sympathy, as the pure, unselfish, and uniform patriotism of his life commands our admiration. And his speeches show us, what he who reads only Demosthenes would hardly discover, that at Athens a man might be a politician, a patriot, and yet a gentleman. The speech of Hyperides against Demosthenes contains none of the vulgar abuse which defaces the pages of Demosthenes' speeches against Midias or on the Embassy, or even on the Crown. Hyperides was undoubtedly a profligate. It is he of whom the story is told that, when pleading for Phryne, and despairing of winning the case by any other means, he revealed the charms of his client and secured a verdict. The story is false. He did, however, plead for Phryne, and for or against half-a-dozen other hetæræ; and

[1] The last speech against Autocles dates B.C. 360.

scandal goes so far as to allege that he carried on liaisons with as many as three of these ladies at once. But whereas the scandals connected with Demosthenes make us think of Tiberius, Hyperides reminds us of, and we can be no more angry with him than we are with Charles Surface. The same wit, polish, and good breeding characterise both.

In the history of Greek oratory Hyperides is a second Lysias. When we come to Hyperides, we miss the intense and marvellous earnestness of Demosthenes, which is apt to become[1] monotonous, and we are no longer exposed to his powerful, and indeed overpowering, command of oratory. On the other hand, and in compensation, we get back to the grace, the ease, and the simplicity of Lysias. There is nothing stilted or studied about Hyperides. His speeches read as though they were thrown off by the author without the least effort or even premeditation. They are none the less effective. Easy and unconcerned as Hyperides is, he has an iron grasp. Although in his longer sentences he lets his words fall from his lips in the most natural manner, just as they occur to him, he brings the sentence to a graceful close, which is the more effective because unexpected. Like most other authors, he has his anacolutha, and he is in particular liable to a careless yet not offensive repetition of words. Again, although he generally allows the course of the sentence to wander about in this unconcerned way, only recalling it when it has to be brought to a conclusion, he can, when he cares to rouse himself for a moment from his often languid attitude (which one suspects is not languid at all in reality, but assumed to avoid making a display of his strength), rap out sharp, short sentences, which show anything but weakness. In fact, Hyperides has all the grace and charm of Lysias with the further advantage, which Lysias did not enjoy, of living after Lysias. Hyperides has before him the example of Lysias and of another generation in oratory. He has power as well as grace of expression; nor is he so limited in the range of his vocabulary as was Lysias. Hyperides is even less constrained and more easy in his choice of words than Demosthenes. He speaks in a distinctly conversational style, and uses words which might pass in conversation or in comedy, but were usually avoided in compositions as wanting in dignity.[2] But still more is he supe-

[1] As the writer περὶ ὕψους even seems to have felt, c. 34, οὐ πάντα ἐξῆς καὶ μονοτόνως ὡς ὁ Δημοσθένης λέγει.

[2] *E.g.* κρόνος, in the sense of "an old fool"; κοκκύζειν = "to cock-a-doodle-doo," whereas it was proper to talk of the cock's song (ᾄδειν)—γαλεάγρα (a cat-trap) for "prison;" and the comic superlative and diminutives, μον-



rior to Lysias in the arrangement of his subject-matter. The arguments of Lysias are brought forward one after another in a disjointed manner with no pretence of connection or unity. But Hyperides, who had Isocrates before him, effects the transition from one argument to another in the smoothest and neatest of ways. Above all, and most characteristic of Hyperides is it that he is throughout a gentleman. His politeness, especially when he is making a crushing retort, is scrupulous. Emotion probably, the display of emotion certainly, he regarded as bad form. Accordingly, he not only avoids anything tragic or exaggerated himself, but he is especially happy in the quiet irony with which he treats any such display from the opposite side. He met a solemn appeal to and a dreadful picture of the terrors of the next world by the simple query, "And if a sword does hang over the neck of Tantalus, how is the defendant to blame?"

It will, however perhaps be better to study Hyperides in the concrete, and for this purpose we will take the speech for Euxenippus. This speech was delivered under these circumstances. When the common land of Oropus, which was given to the Athenians by Philip after the battle of Chæronea, had been divided by lot among the tribes of Athens, it was discovered that the portion which fell to the lot of two of the tribes had been previously dedicated to the hero Amphiaraus; and, in order to discover whether to occupy this land would provoke the hero's wrath, Euxenippus was commissioned to sleep in the temple of Amphiaraus and report his dreams—which not unnaturally were in favour of occupying the land. Whereupon, a certain Polyeuctus proposed that, notwithstanding, the land should be appropriated to the hero and not to the tribes. His proposal was rejected and he was fined. Polyeuctus then proceeds to bring an impeachment[1] against Euxenippus, in that, being an orator[2] (which Euxenippus was not), he had not advised people for the best.

Athenian law, although it insisted that the parties to any suit should themselves speak, permitted a man's friends to also speak for him. One of the supporters[3] of Euxenippus on this occasion, doubtless paid, as were such supporters usually, was Hyperides. He did not deliver the leading speech, but followed with a deuterology. Accordingly he has not to set forth the facts of

ὡραιος, παιδάριον, θεραπόντιον, ἀνδραπόδια. Add κόρη (a maiden), meaning an Attic coin bearing the image of Athene; *cf.* "yellow-boys." For a complete list see H. Hager, *De Græcitate Hyperidea*.

[1] εἰσαγγελία.

[2] *I.e.* a politician by profession, such as Demosthenes.

[3] συνήγοροι.

the case, but to say what he can to make a favourable impression on behalf of Euxenippus, and this is the delightfully casual way in which he begins: "Well, gentlemen, I, as I was just saying to those sitting near me, am astonished you are not sick of impeachments of this kind." Formerly men were impeached for betraying ships or towns. "But now what happens is quite absurd. Diognides and Antidorus, the metic, are impeached for paying more than the law allows for flute-players; and Euxenippus for the dreams he says he has had," neither of which offences makes a man liable to be impeached according to the law of impeachment. But Polyeuctus says, Do not look at what the law says. Whereas, this is just what I indeed should have said was the first thing to do. In a democracy (note the adroit appeal to the jury's patriotism) we act according to the law. "A man commits sacrilege: indict him before the king-archon! is undutiful to his parents: the archon tries the case! a man proposes illegal motions: there is the college of the Thesmothetæ! merits summary proceedings: the Eleven are in existence," and so on. Every offence has its law, and every law has its offences against which it is directed. The law of impeachment is expressly limited to "orators," and very sensibly too, else orators would get all the profits of their profession, and run no risks. However, Polyeuctus says that to this law, in virtue of which he is bringing this charge, you must pay no attention! Other complainants, indeed, insist on your keeping the defendant to the law, but you (turning politely to Polyeuctus) say, Do not let him rest his defence on the law. Moreover, he says that the defendant, inexperienced as he is in speaking, ought not to be allowed to have any friends to assist him; whereas this has always been allowed. Did you (again turning to Polyeuctus, and more politely than before) never avail yourself of this custom? Why, when you were put on your defence by Alexander of Oios, you applied for ten supporters to assist you, and I was one of them. Need more be said? except that on the present trial you have Lycurgus, whom we all respect, and who is the best orator of our day, to render you assistance. Then, whether defendant or plaintiff, you, who can speak well enough to bother a whole city, are to have assistance, and Euxenippus, who is old and not accustomed to public speaking, is to have none? But, of course, you will say he has committed such dreadful crimes. Let us therefore see. If he spoke the truth about his dream, where is his crime? if not, you ought to have gone to Delphi and inquired the truth. But instead, you brought forward a proposal (which



was not only unjust, but contradicted itself), and got fined, and so Euxenippus must suffer, and not be even buried in Attic ground, because (this bridges over the transition to the next charge alleged against Euxenippus) he allowed Olympias to dedicate an offering to Hygieia, thereby showing his Macedonian tendencies. But the very boys from school know who takes Macedonian gold, and nobody imagines Euxenippus ever thought of such a thing. But there seems to me, Polyeuctus, nothing you cannot convert into an accusation. Yet, with your power of oratory (again notice Hyperides' politeness), you ought to prosecute men who really can injure the country, not men like Euxenippus—or any of the jury (note the dexterous identification). That is what I did when I impeached Aristophon and Diopithes and Philocrates, and I quoted the very words in which they failed to advise the city for the best, whereas you can quote no such words uttered by Euxenippus (Euxenippus, of course, had been commissioned to dream, and he dreamed, but he never offered any advice of any description to the city). And then you try to rouse ill feeling against him by accusing him of being rich. "You do not seem to know, Polyeuctus, that there is no democracy in the whole world, no monarch nor nation, more noble than the democracy of Athens," and that consequently sycophants (here he gives instances) are righteously punished here. "Before sitting down, I will make one short remark more about the vote you are going to give. When, gentlemen of the jury, you are about to consider your verdict, bid the clerk read to you the impeachment, the law of impeachment, and the juror's oath. Put on one side all our speeches. Look at the impeachment and the law, and what you think just and true, that give as your verdict. Now, Euxenippus, I have done my best for you. The next thing is to get leave from the jury, and call your friends, and bring up your children."

This summary can only give a faint idea of the careless grace of the speech for Euxenippus. We can well understand that the author of the ancient treatise "On the Sublime" was quite right in saying[1] that "no one ever felt frightened when reading Hyperides." But Polyeuctus must have felt a certain amount of alarm when he saw Hyperides get up from his bench, breaking off a conversation with his neighbours, and begin in his calm unconcerned manner to quietly but effectually pull him to pieces. The power of Hyperides is rendered all the more forcible, in the first place, because he makes no display of his strength. On the contrary, he is so strong that he feels no need to put

[1] Ch. 34.

forth his strength, but treats everybody with consideration and inbred politeness. Thus at the end of the speech for Euxenippus he modestly says, "Now, Euxenippus, I have done my best for you. The next thing is," &c. With this we may compare the end of the speech for Lycophron. "If you will allow me, gentlemen, I will ask some one to support me. Come here, Theophilus, and say what you can for me. The jury give you permission." In the next place, the power of Hyperides is rendered the more forcible by the attitude which he assumes. Demosthenes, even in his deuterologies, always takes up a somewhat hostile attitude towards the jury. He uses his technical power and his irresistible force of argument as though the jury were not with him. Lysias, on the other hand, does not rely on his arguments; he seeks to bring over the jury by his winning and artless manner of stating his case. But Hyperides in the speech for Euxenippus does not seem to be speaking as an advocate at all. His attitude is rather that of a bystander—a bystander, however, who, as he casually allows it to be seen, knows a good deal about the matter in hand, and who merely gets up to see fair play. "Never mind what the advocates say, but judge of the law for yourselves," is what he says to the jury. With all this gentleness of manner, however, and apparent impartiality, he was capable of making some very sharp thrusts, as when he disposed of the rhetoric of Demeas (son of Demades by a flute-player) with the quiet criticism, "Pray cease! you make more noise than your mother."

The speech for Lycophron, delivered some time before B.C. 338, is like the speech for Euxenippus, an instance of how the law of impeachment might be abused. One section of this law provided that any man might be impeached who, "being an orator, advised the people not for the best." It was, however, a considerable strain on the law, as Hyperides points out, to bring it against Euxenippus, who was not an orator (in this sense of the term), and had not offered any advice of any kind, but only had a dream, as required by the state. So too Lycophron, if guilty, was guilty of adultery, but he was accused by Lycurgus under the section of the law directed against attempts to "subvert the democracy," the argument being that attacks on private morality shook the foundations of government. Of Hyperides' speech on behalf of Lycophron we possess only fragments, but the history of these and of the other three speeches of Hyperides which we possess is extremely interesting. As late as the sixteenth century there was a considerable number of Hyperides' speeches extant in MS. in the King's Library at



Buda, but after the capture of that city by the Turks in 1526, this copy of Hyperides disappeared. From that time, consequently, for more than three centuries, beyond the descriptions of Hyperides' style to be found in ancient literary critics, such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus (B.C. 70–B.C. 8) or Longinus (A.D. 213–273), the only knowledge of Hyperides was what might be obtained from words of his quoted by lexicographers, such as Julius Pollux (who flourished about A.D. 180, and wrote an Onomasticon), or Harpocration (who lived in the third or fourth century after Christ, and wrote a "Lexicon of the Ten Orators"), and from passages (especially the peroration of the Funeral Oration) quoted by Stobæus (flourished about A.D. 520) in his "Selections or Anthology of Apophthegms and Precepts."

But in 1847 Mr. A. C. Harris purchased at Thebes in Egypt from an Italian dealer in antiquities some rolls of papyrus, which proved to contain fragments of Hyperides' speech against Demosthenes, and of the beginning of that for Lycophron. In the same year and at the same place, Mr. Joseph Arden was offered by the Arabs of the neighbourhood a papyrus volume which he bought, and which was discovered to contain the latter part of the speech for Lycophron, and the whole of that for Euxenippus. Nine years later, in 1856, Mr. H. Stobart purchased at Thebes a papyrus volume which turned out to be the Funeral Oration by Hyperides.

The papyri of Mr. Harris and Mr. Arden originally constituted one volume, which was torn up by the Arabs in order to obtain a price for each of the parts. As to the age of this volume, so great an authority as the present Bishop of Durham has placed it, on palæographic grounds, not later than the middle of the second century before Christ; but, while palæography is in its present immature state, it does not seem possible to do more, on palæographic grounds, than place the manuscript, as Blass[1] does, between that date and the time of Hadrian or the Antonines. Mr. Stobart's volume, which contains the Funeral Oration, admits of a more precise date. It contains, in addition to the Funeral Oration, a horoscope, of which the language is mainly Egyptian, though written in Greek characters. This horoscope contains the position of the planets at the time of the taking of the horoscope, and it has been ascertained by astronomical computations that the horoscope was cast either for April 1, A.D. 95, or for May 15, A.D. 155. And as the horoscope was written on the papyrus before the funeral oration, the latter must be later than A.D. 95. If these astronomical

[1] *Hyperides:* Trübner, 1881.

calculations may be relied on, and the volume containing the Funeral Oration (although much more carelessly written) belongs, as is probable, to the same date as the other volume, then we have another reason for not dating the volume containing the law speeches before Christ, at all events.

The speech against Demosthenes[1] we have already alluded to in connection with the Harpalus affair. The leading speech for the prosecution in this trial was made by Stratocles, who was probably followed by several other speakers before it came to the turn of Hyperides to deliver his speech. The text has unfortunately suffered at the hands of the Arabs who tore up this papyrus before selling it, but the outline of the speech can be made out still. As, like the speech for Euxenippus, this is a deuterology, Hyperides has not to set forth the facts of the case, but to make as damaging an impression as possible. This he does without any heat and without any vulgarity. He begins in the same easy manner as in the speech for Euxenippus: "Well, gentlemen, I am astonished so much ceremony should be made about Demosthenes." The accusation he treats as requiring no proof—the investigation by the Areopagus has settled the matter. Moreover, Demosthenes had not attempted to defend himself, but instead, "you go about challenging the senate to say where you got the money, who gave it you, and when. Perhaps you will proceed to also ask what you did with the money when you got it, as though the senate kept your banking account." The admissions of Demosthenes' friends were equally damaging, for they hinted that the money had indeed gone, but gone to remedy a deficit in the public treasury. Then Hyperides, having done his best to prove that Demosthenes was bribed by Harpalus, goes on to prove that he had also been for a long time in the habit of taking bribes from Alexander. After this the speech becomes very fragmentary, and we will not attempt any further analysis. We will only say, that if even Hyperides could not satisfactorily explain the behaviour of Demosthenes on the hypothesis that he was bribed by Harpalus, but had to resort to the further (and very improbable) hypothesis that he was also bribed by Alexander, we may conclude that the case against Demosthenes, so far as being bribed by Harpalus is concerned, is not very strong.

By far the most important discovery, however, among the papyri, indeed the most important for a century back, was that of the Funeral Oration. For more than a century and a half it was the custom at Athens for a funeral oration to be publicly

[1] κατὰ Δημοσθένους ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἁρπαλείων.

delivered at the public funeral of those men who had met their death while fighting for the country. In the famous Funeral Oration of Pericles, as given by Thucydides, we doubtless have most of the ideas expressed by Pericles in that speech, but the language and the form are unmistakably the work of Thucydides. In addition to this, we have a Funeral Oration falsely ascribed to Lysias, and another equally falsely ascribed to Demosthenes. But up to the time of Mr. Stobart's purchase there was no funeral oration known which had really been delivered at Athens over the dead; for the orations ascribed to Lysias and Demosthenes are mere exercises, and Gorgias' speech, of which we have a fragment, could not have been delivered in any official capacity by him, as he was not an Athenian. The appointment of an orator to discharge this function was a matter of serious deliberation on the part of the senate, and a mark of great popularity on the part of the orator chosen. The appointment of Hyperides, therefore, in B.C. 322, to deliver this oration marks the position of importance which he occupied during the Lamian war, of which he had been in large measure the promoter, and in which the dead over whom he was to speak had fallen.

The orator on these occasions was allowed little latitude in the choice of his subjects or in the form of his speech. It was ordained by custom that the orator, after a few opening words, the proem, should dwell upon the glorious history of Athens, then praise the dead warriors, then speak some words of advice and consolation to their relatives, and end by bidding his hearers raise the funeral cry.[1] As the orator was limited to these topics, and the speeches were made during a century and a half, the funeral oration is a marked example of the difference which we and the Athenians make in the value set upon the treatment of a subject. With the Athenians the treatment was everything. With us the subject-matter is everything. The same difference is to be observed with regard to the drama. At Athens mythological subjects, perfectly well known to all the audience, supplied the plot—which, consequently, had no surprise in store for the spectators—and also supplied the figures which, as a rule, preserved the characters conventionally assigned to them. The Athenians, therefore, were alive to the finest variations in the details of the treatment which a myth or a character received at the hands of various dramatists.

[1] (Dem.) *Epitaphios* 37: *ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀποδυράμενοι καὶ τὰ προσήκοντα ὡς χρὴ καὶ νόμιμα ποιήσαντες ἄπιτε.* (Lys.) *Epitaphios* 81: *θεραπεύοντας τὸν πάτριον νόμον ὀλοφύρεσθαι τοὺς θαπτομένους.*

Moreover, their familiarity with the myth, and their opportunities of comparing the different modes of working on the same myth, must have given them, as critics, almost the same advantage as a man would have who had tried himself to write a play. This familiarity with the dramatist's materials had the further result of making it indispensable at Athens that a play should be written in verse and not in prose. The modern tendency, on the other hand, is to judge a play by the plot, pay little attention to treatment, and write in prose; so that in no remote future we may wonder as much at the Athenian custom of writing plays in verse as we now do at their having covered their marble buildings and statuary with paint.

A funeral oration could not indeed be written in verse, but it essentially belonged to that class of orations—the epideictic—which Isocrates says have the same functions to discharge and aim at the same effect as poetry or music. The topics of a funeral oration, like the plot of a play, were fully known to the audience beforehand. The Athenians listened, not in order to satisfy the cravings of a restless intellect, but to gratify their artistic instincts.

In the treatise "On the Sublime," Hyperides' Funeral Oration is ranked as the highest effort of panegyric oratory, and we may accept this judgment. Finally, it must not be overlooked that in one important and significant respect Hyperides transgresses the lines laid down by custom for the orator on these occasions to follow. It was inconsistent with the practice of democratic Athens that any of the dead should be mentioned by name: in Athens equality did not end, as neither did it begin, at the grave. The violation of this equality and the decline of the democracy are signalised by Hyperides' trangression of this practice in the last funeral oration delivered while Athens was free.

Lycurgus, the next orator of the patriotic party whom we have to consider, we have already incidentally mentioned as taking the opposite side to Hyperides in the cases of Euxenippus and Lycophron. As an orator he was distinctly inferior to Hyperides. He had no natural gift for oratory, but worked at the subject with great determination and perseverance. His education under Isocrates, moreover, was not the most suitable for his object, as Isocrates is purely an epideictic orator, while Lycurgus needed oratory only for practical purposes. Even thus, with the education he had received and the hard work he bestowed upon the art of speaking, he seems only to have spoken when circumstances compelled him; for, as far as our

knowledge goes, all his speeches date from between the battle of Chæronea and his death in B.C. 322. In other respects than his oratory he was a complete contrast to Hyperides. Born about B.C. 390, some few years before Hyperides and Demosthenes, Lycurgus was the only politician of good family among the orators of his day; and the character of the man throughout his life showed the effect of the family traditions under which he was born and educated. As was usual in a man of aristocratic extraction, he had a certain leaning to Sparta and to the Spartan mode of life, politics, and thought. The quotations he makes from the poets bear witness to the fact that his family clung to the traditional mode of education; while his religious views remained unaffected by the growing tendency to sceptical investigation. Although a true patriot and a loyal son of democratic Athens, he always preserved the attitude of superiority to the ordinary citizen which came naturally to a man of good descent and old-fashioned severity of life. He was accordingly respected by the Athenians to an extent almost indistinguishable from fear, and whatever Lycurgus said the Athenians accepted as true. The service which he rendered to his country, beyond that of the example of his life, lay in his finance. His powers in this respect were quite unequalled in the history of Greece, and Boeckh[1] calls him almost the only real financier that antiquity produced. In the history of literature, also, Lycurgus deserves an honourable name, for it was on his proposal that an authorised text of the works of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides was drawn up and deposited in the state archives, so that the alterations, interpolations, and "gags" introduced by the actors might henceforth be rendered impossible.

Of the fifteen speeches which we hear of as having been delivered by Lycurgus, only one, that against Leocrates, has come down to us. In addition to it, however, we have some of his decrees and laws, which inscriptions have preserved for us.[2] His vocabulary and his metaphors are poetical to an extent which would have been more intelligible in the immaturity of Attic oratory than it is at its close. At the same time, Lycurgus was a diligent pupil of Isocrates, and the influence of his master is visible in the epideictic character of his speech. For practical purposes both these tendencies were ill adapted; they have, however, a harmony with the character of Lycurgus. Much speaking he seems not to have done; but when he did speak, it was to be impressive and solemn, and in this he was aided by both his unusual vocabulary and his epideictic manner. His

[1] S. I. 569. [2] C. I. A. ii. 162 (163), 168, 173, 176, 180, 180b, 202.

oratory is thus distinct in quality both from the technical power of Demosthenes and the easy authority of Hyperides. His hard work, not being supplemented by any great natural capacity for oratory, betrays itself in the monotony which makes the speech against Leocrates somewhat tedious.

Hegesippus, who belonged to the extreme section of the patriotic party, was probably a little older than Demosthenes, and died about B.C. 324. The most important fact that we know with regard to his life is that he was at the head of an embassy sent in B.C. 343 from Athens to Philip to negotiate about the restoration of the island of Halonnesus and other matters. Philip rejected the terms of the Athenians, but in the following year sent an embassy and a letter, offering, among other things, to present the island to Athens. During the debate on this offer was delivered the speech on the Halonnesus, which is included among Demosthenes' works, but is really the composition of Hegesippus.

The political tone and sentiments of the speech are exactly in the vein of Demosthenes. The distinction between "giving" and "giving back" the island is expressly ascribed to Demosthenes by Æschines;[1] and, lastly, Demosthenes did deliver a speech on this occasion on this subject. On the other hand, if the political tone is that of Demosthenes, the literary style is certainly not. In the periods of Demosthenes the colon which gives the keynote to the sentence is reserved to the end. As thus the dependent thoughts come first, and the weight of the sentence is thrown forward, the hearer's attention is kept on the alert to the end, and consequently highly complex sentences are possible, which resemble an organism, in that the parts are not separable and independent, but are conditioned by, and only have a meaning in connection with, the whole. This rhetorical structure of the period is not presented by the speech on the Halonnesus, which in the structure of its sentences is neither rhetorical nor epideictic, but rather resembles Hyperides in the somewhat chance sequence of its cola, although the easy flow of Hyperides' sentences is missing. Moreover, not only is there no attempt in the speech to limit the occurrence of hiatus in accordance with the rules observed by Demosthenes, but there is no attempt to avoid hiatus at all.[2] As to the distinction between "giving" and "giving back" the island, this was doubt-

[1] 3, 83: Ἀλόννησον ἐδίδου· ὁ δ' ἀπηγόρευε μὴ λαμβάνειν, εἰ δίδωσιν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀποδίδωσι, περὶ συλλαβῶν διαφερόμενος.

[2] The expression with which the speech concludes has been taken to be too coarse for Demosthenes, but such an argument is worthless.



less a party cry, and used by every orator who got up to speak on that side: and against this argument for ascribing the speech to Demosthenes we may fairly set a passage[1] which probably implies that the speaker was a member of the embassy sent to Philip, as indeed Hegesippus was, although Demosthenes was not. Finally, the fact that Demosthenes delivered a speech on this occasion, and on this subject, is probably the reason why, in the absence of Demosthenes' speech, the speech of Hegesippus, whose oratory shows the influence of Demosthenes, came to be inserted among the great orator's speeches.

The speech on the Treaty with Alexander[2] which is usually published among the works of Demosthenes, is not by Demosthenes, but by some contemporary speaker of the anti-Macedonian party. The date of the speech is about B.C. 335, and its object is to rouse the Athenians to shake off Alexander's yoke, on the ground that he had broken the treaty which constituted him protector of the Greeks. The speech is in places illogical and obscure. There is little fire about it; the language is not always pure Attic, and there seem to be no grounds for attributing the speech, as has been done, either to Hegesippus or Hyperides.

Polyeuctus of Sphettus is spoken of highly by Demosthenes, to whose section of the anti-Macedonian party he seems to have belonged, for we find that in the Harpalus affair, he, unlike Hyperides, took the side of Demosthenes. None of his speeches have come down to our time, but we know that he supported Lycurgus in accusing Cephisodotus of illegality, in that he proposed to erect in the market-place a statue of Demades, who by means of his relations with Macedonia had been able to save Athens from being destroyed by Alexander. A fragment of this speech has been preserved,[3] which shows that he had some of the quiet power of Hyperides. He inquires what sort of a statue they were to put up to Demades: they could not have him represented with a shield, for he threw it away at Chæronea: if he was represented resting on the gunwale of a ship, the question would be suggested, when did he or his father give a ship to the state: "then with a scroll in his hand? containing the indictments and impeachments he has gone through?" and so on.

[1] *ἔλεγεν δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς τοιούτους λόγους, ὅτε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπρεσβεύσαμεν.*
[2] *περὶ τῶν πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον συνθηκῶν.*
[3] In Apsines, Spengel *Rhetores Graeci*, i. 387.



CHAPTER VIII.

ÆSCHINES AND THE ORATORS OF THE MACEDONIAN PARTY.

Our knowledge of the life of Æschines is drawn in the main directly or indirectly from the speeches of Demosthenes and of Æschines himself. The sketch drawn by Demosthenes[1] is the one best known, but it is merely a caricature—drawn in the style and with the recklessness of Aristophanes—which in those particulars that we have not facts to contradict, must be regarded as probably either untrue or only having the very slenderest substratum of fact. According to Demosthenes the parents of Æschines were both of them slaves by birth. His father, Tromes, became an Athenian citizen, and having risen in life, added a couple of syllables to his name—a practice not unknown in English society—and became Atrometus. His mother, Glaucothea, nicknamed Empusa, was a hetæra of the commonest kind, who imitated the greater members of her profession, such as Phryne, and initiated people into a mystery-worship of her own invention. The son, Æschines, combined the duties of menial attendant in the school which his father held, with those of chest-bearer, fan-bearer, &c., in the rites of his mother. Such is the story of Demosthenes. Whether the father was or was not a slave by birth we have no evidence: the utmost that can be shown is that Demosthenes' account is possible. There is no reason for regarding it as probable.[2] Still less probable is the change of name on the part of the father. The mother was of respectable origin, daughter of Glaucus of Acharnæ, and sister of Cleobulus the general. By the poverty, which at the end of the Peloponnesian war fell on many Athenians, she may have been compelled to conduct mysteries, and this is probably the only ground for aspersions on her mode of life. With regard generally to what Demosthenes makes out in the speech on the Crown, it is enough to say that he is there raking up what had happened—or rather not happened—some fifty years before: that in his earlier speech on the Embassy, he seems to have known nothing of all this, and that the basis of it all is probably to be found in the fact that the position in life which Æschines and his two brothers earned for themselves was much higher than that which they started from.

[1] *De Cor.* 129 et seqq., and 258 et seqq.

[2] Æschines himself (*De mala gesta legatione*, 147) says his father was a citizen, and of the deme Cothocidæ.



Æschines was born about B.C. 390, six years before Demosthenes. Rhetorical or philosophical education he does not seem to have received; but his fondness for talking about education seems to show that he at least was not ashamed of having been taught by his father the schoolmaster. At the age of eighteen he entered on the military service usually imposed on Athenian citizens, and bore himself with courage and distinction,[1] especially at Tamynæ. He then became clerk in some government office, a profession which, as it was paid, was looked down upon by Athenians of good position. With a versatility, however, which testifies both to the energy and to the natural abilities of the man, he then took to the stage. In point of social status this was no advance on his previous position, especially as he did not rise to the higher ranks of his profession. Some merit, however, he must have had, else so good a judge as Theodorus would never have chosen him as his tritagonist.[2] His quitting this profession was due to an accident which is interesting as illuminating the limits imposed on stage action by the costume of tragedy. In the character of Oenomaus (in the play of that name by Sophocles), Æschines had to give chase to Pelops. The buskins, the bolsters, the mask and the topknot, the padding and gloves, however, in which he was arrayed were not adapted for such active exercise. Æschines fell, and had to be ignominiously set up again by the leader of the chorus. He returned to his earlier profession of clerk, and this time attached himself to two distinguished statesmen, Aristophon and Eubulus, by whose assistance he might hope to gain political distinction.

Æschines' experience in life up to this point had been varied, and had given him various qualifications for superficial success as a politician. As an actor he learnt to manage his voice, which was fine, to declaim, and to pose. He also acquired a more than usually accurate acquaintance with the dramatists, and this was a large portion of Athenian education. With the routine of official life, his experience as clerk had made him familiar, and his command of the technicalities of the phraseology of laws and decrees would give him the air of a politician with a knowledge of the constitution. On the other hand, he had had no systematic education in philosophy or rhetoric, as Demosthenes or Hyperides had had, nor did he inherit any family traditions such as, in the case of Lycurgus, introduce men to statesmanship. Accordingly, Æschines never became more than

[1] This is an offence which Demosthenes could never forgive him (*De Cor.* 326).

[2] Dem. xix. 246.

a second-rate politician. He did not speak with much regularity in the Assembly, and the embassies on which he was sent were not of the first importance, as the one in B.C. 348 to the Peloponnese; or if, as in the case of those to Philip in 346, or after Chæronea in 338, they were of importance, the part assigned to him was subordinate. It is to his collisions with Demosthenes on the subject of the embassy to Philip, of which they were both members, that Æschines owes in great part the celebrity which attaches to his name. Once more Æschines ventured to attack Demosthenes, in the matter of the crown, and this brought about his own extinction; for, having failed to obtain one-fifth of the votes in this trial, he, rather than pay the fine and submit to the disgrace consequent on his failure, left Athens and never returned. Whither he went and how he died are matters of uncertainty. He is said to have gone to Rhodes, and to have set up a school of rhetoric there.

Æschines seems to have committed but few of his speeches to writing, and only three of those have come down to us, that against Timarchus, that on the Embassy, and the one against Ctesiphon. These three speeches were published by Æschines to justify his personal and political character. Other motives for publication he had none, as he was neither a logographer, to wish to advertise himself, nor a great statesman, to wish to publish his policy as widely as possible, nor a teacher of style.

As in the history of Attic oratory we have in Hyperides a reversion to the type of oratory displayed by Lysias, so in Æschines we have a reversion to the type of Andocides. Between Æschines and Andocides, however, there are great differences. Æschines had a natural talent, which Andocides did not possess; was swayed by better oratorical traditions, and had before him better models in oratory than was the case with Andocides. Neither Æschines nor Andocides spoke regularly in public; neither was a logographer, and neither had received a technical education in oratory. Making allowance for the difference in talent and in time between the two orators, the results of this want of practice and education on each are the same. To bring this out in detail we shall have to compare with Æschines Demosthenes, the practised and educated orator. The comparison is the more necessary as Æschines undoubtedly ranks next to Demosthenes as an orator, and it is important to see why and how these orators differ.

The highest excellence of Æschines lies in his power of expression. The first quality demanded of an orator is that he should express himself clearly, and a certain amount of educa-



tion and practice will enable a man to be intelligible when he especially strives to be so. But to be always clear and intelligible demands further education and practice. The habit of clear expression must be exercised until it becomes a second nature; and it is just this further education and practice which Demosthenes had and Æschines had not. Æschines is intelligible when he has a particular motive to be so, but is not clear always. The same defect also betrays itself in his awkward repetition of words. Clearness of expression, however, is not the only quality demanded of an orator: his expressions must also be felicitous. For this end a man must obviously have a wide range of words at his command, in order to fit each thought with the words which will appropriately and happily express it. Like Demosthenes, Æschines possesses this necessary command of language, and it is his highest and a very high excellence. So far as the two orators differ—to the prejudice of Æschines—the difference mainly consists in the way in which they employ their resources. An expression may be excellently calculated to convey a given thought, and yet from want of dignity, from the association of ideas, or from some other reason, be in a given case not appropriate. In other words, an Attic orator had to limit the brilliance or grandeur of his language by considerations of correctness and of purity of style. The perfect exercise of these limitations is always the result of special education and of practice, reinforced by natural taste. To illustrate the superiority of Demosthenes in this respect the grander passages of the two orators should be compared. For the expression of lofty sentiments lofty words are required, for the style should rise and fall with the subject. In exalted passages, therefore, the tendency of an Attic orator was to rise from the tone of ordinary life towards the tone of tragedy. In an early stage of oratory this was done by Andocides by the introduction of phrases almost immediately from tragedy, and the result is that between the passages thus introduced and the rest of the speech there is a difference of quality so great that the purity of Andocides' style is considerably marred. Æschines, like Andocides, lacked the rhetorical education necessary to prevent him from making this mistake, but by the time of Æschines the critical faculty was improved so much that Æschines could not sin in this respect to the same extent as Andocides, and in Æschines, although we have words which distinctly belong to the tragedians, we no longer have whole phrases lugged in. Demosthenes, on the other hand, does not imbed either such words or such phrases in his

oratory. He takes his tone and not his words from tragedy. What he borrows from the tragedians he gives out again in a shape which is all his own, and consequently does not jar with the rest of the passage.

We have seen in the chapter on Demosthenes that one source of his strength is his complete command of all the figures of speech and of thought, and that in this respect he far outstrips any previous orator. In this he has a close rival in Æschines, whose wide range of language is also supplemented by a wide and varied command of figures. Here, also, such superiority as Demosthenes may possess is due to his greater experience in oratory. The result of this experience is that Demosthenes has command of language; on the other hand, Æschines' words are apt to run away with him, as was also the case with the less experienced Andocides. This is in part due to the copious vocabulary and facile flow of language which in other respects constitutes the strength of Æschines. He finds it so easy to talk that he is apt to degenerate into mere talk. Assonances of words, or of the ends of words, are sometimes sought solely for their own sake, not for the sake of giving force and weight to his words; and this is the abuse of figures of speech. The experience of Demosthenes and his sense of limit enabled him to exercise due restraint in the use of figures of all kinds, but Æschines weakens their effect by using them to excess.[1] Not only does this want of restraint sometimes weaken the effect of Æschines' words and figures, it sometimes also betrays him into sentences of extreme clumsiness. The sentences of Isocrates are long, but they are always constructed with such perfect regularity that they are quite transparent. Demosthenes has sentences of great length, but there is always so much obvious design in them, and they are penetrated by such unity of thought, that their length is not felt. Hyperides wanders through long sentences apparently of the most casual structure, or want of structure, but his native grace and his concealed power always enable him to bring his sentences to a happy and effective close. Æschines, on the other hand, when off his guard, drifts into a sentence of

[1] An example of effective use of the figure antistrophe, *i.e.* the repetition of a word at the end of successive clauses, is the famous passage in *Ctes.* 202, *μηδ' ἐν ἀρετῇ τοῦθ' ὑμῶν μηδεὶς καταλογιζέσθαι, ὃς ἂν ἐπανερομένου Κτησιφῶντος, εἰ καλέσῃ Δημοσθένην, πρῶτος ἀναβοήσῃ "κάλει κάλει." ἐπὶ σαυτὸν καλεῖς, ἐπὶ τοὺς νόμους καλεῖς. ἐπὶ τὴν δημοκρατιάν καλεῖς.* But the effect of this passage is weakened by the use of the same figure shortly before, 198, *ὅστις μὲν οὖν ἐν τῇ τιμήσει τὴν ψῆφον αἰτεῖ, τὴν ὀργὴν τὴν ὑμετέραν παραιτεῖται ὅστις δ' ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ λόγῳ τὴν ψῆφον αἰτεῖ, νόμων αἰτεῖ, ὧν οὔτε αἰτῆσαι οἰόδεν ὅσιον οὐδενὶ οὔτ' αἰτηθέντα ἑτέρῳ δοῦναι.*



which "you see no reason in its structure why it should ever come to an end, and you accept the conclusion as an arrangement of Providence rather than of the author."

There are three ends at which, roughly speaking, we may say an orator has to aim: to express himself clearly and felicitously; to convince his hearers; and to inspire them with his own feelings. With regard to the first of these we have now seen that so good are the natural gifts of Æschines that it is only because of Demosthenes' superior experience and practice as a public speaker and a logographer that he just manages to outstrip him. When, however, we come to the second of the three objects an orator has to aim at, we find the difference between the two orators is great. In dealing with Andocides we saw that his lack of experience in arguing cases made him vastly inferior in argument when compared with Antiphon. The same difference is visible between Æschines and Demosthenes, and is made still greater by the superior intellectual power of Demosthenes. In the arrangement of his subject-matter, indeed, Æschines is clever enough. This, however, is a power easily acquired by imitation, and in it we may clearly see the advance which the general level of oratory made between the time of Andocides and of Æschines. The powers of Æschines seem to have been retentive rather than original. His speeches contain a large amount of information—usually inaccurate—but like his loans from tragedy it has not been assimilated. His want of mental power is seen again when he undertakes to expound the law. He expends many words on explaining the laws he quotes, and ends by not explaining them. His arguments, moreover, are not unfrequently illogical, and he gladly takes refuge, for instance, in misty declamations based on popular superstition[1] rather than submit his argument to the light of logical criticism. Above all, however, if an orator fails to convey to the minds of his audience his own view of the case, it is mainly because he is himself not clear in his view. This is the reason why his great attack upon Demosthenes in the matter of the crown fails. To attack the policy of Demosthenes successfully it was necessary to state an alternative line of action. If the policy of opposing Macedonia was wrong, then there must have been some other policy which was right, and that policy it was Æschines' business to propound. But Æschines has no such alternative line of action to propose. If, instead of employing an argument, he imputes a motive—and bribery, bribery, bribery is, signifi-

[1] In *Ctes.* 106–158 (the diatribe against the ill-luck and impiety of Demosthenes).

cantly enough, the only motive which Æschines can imagine— it is because he has no argument. Not only, however, is he destitute of any constructive idea, but his criticism is weak. He can only say that Demosthenes' policy failed. And of all criticisms the cheapest and the most worthless is criticism by results.

It is not, however, an orator's business to merely demonstrate a theorem. He has also to command the feelings of his audience. Now there are certain sentiments to which Æschines frequently, and Demosthenes rarely appeals. They are the sentiments which cluster round the family hearth, the worship of the gods, and the history of the past. Again, Demosthenes is not, strictly speaking, pathetic. Some of his speeches do indeed appear to us pathetic, but that is not because they were designed for pathos, but because we know and read them in the light of the subsequent history of Greece. Æschines, on the other hand, as, for instance, in the peroration of the speech on the Embassy, aims at pathos. And in the peroration of the speech against Ctesiphon, Æschines challenges comparison with Demosthenes, even in the power of raising patriotic indignation. In fine, Æschines works on a larger number of more varied emotions than Demosthenes, and yet, by general consent, Æschines is less effective than Demosthenes. Undoubtedly the earnestness of Demosthenes is intense to a greater degree than is that of Æschines or any other orator, and, consequently, he works on our feelings more powerfully than Æschines. But it is also true that the superiority of Demosthenes has been exalted at the expense of Æschines by means of extraneous considerations. In the case of the speeches on the Crown this is clear. Public opinion was on the side of Demosthenes, and Demosthenes had the better cause. Demosthenes has our sympathies before we open Æschines. But this, which is itself an explanation partly why Æschines takes less hold of our feelings, may be pushed too far, and the unfair inference be drawn that, because Æschines failed to prove Demosthenes a traitor, therefore Æschines was a traitor himself. Hence it is said that Æschines fails to make us believe in him, because he did not believe in himself, and that his oratory is pervaded with the taint of insincerity. He poses as a religious citizen and admirable father of a family for the sake of respectability. He assumes patriotism though he has it not, and he trades on pathetic passages because he was an actor by training and by nature theatrical.

The truth, however, seems to be that Æschines was in morals



as in intellect not above the average level of his time, whereas Demosthenes was distinctly above it. Æschines is accused by Demosthenes of having rendered no services to the state; and Demosthenes is always accusing the citizens of Athens generally with reluctance to make any sacrifice for their country. Æschines apparently thought resistance to Philip impossible, and saw no way for Athens to remain great and free, a view in which he was supported by so good a man as Phocion. Bribery, Æschines as a practical man regarded as admitting of extenuating circumstances.[1] As a practical man also he discountenanced the extravagant indulgence of the desires, and, as was the case with many other people, respectability exhausted the sum of his morality. This is not a flattering character of Æschines, and it is unnecessary to go beyond our evidence and accuse him of hypocrisy. Æschines has himself challenged comparison with Demosthenes, and by an optical illusion, to which the mind's eye is liable, Æschines seems below the ordinary level of morality, because Demosthenes is so much above it.

In discussing Demosthenes we said that the three sources of his power as an orator were the magic of his language, the force of his intellect, and his lofty morality. In the present chapter, in order to show how Æschines is inferior to his rival, we have compared the two orators, and we have seen that while in the first of the three points mentioned Æschines is little below Demosthenes, in the remaining two points he is much below him. In order now to mark the fact that Æschines, though inferior to Demosthenes, could yet contest priority with him, we must contrast the two orators. In the first place, as we have already seen, Demosthenes is the trained and practised orator, while Æschines is a man with a natural gift of eloquence. And as Æschines represents nature, Demosthenes art, we find that the former usually spoke extempore, while the latter rarely spoke without preparation. A further consequence of this difference between the two orators is that whereas Demosthenes has greater capacity for argument than

[1] i, 88. Poverty and old age he regards as extenuating: *ἐκεῖνοι μέν γε οἱ παλαίπωροι οὐ δυνάμενοι γῆρας ἅμα καὶ πενίαν ὑπενεγκεῖν, τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακῶν.* This was not a view peculiar to, and therefore specially condemnatory of Æschines, but the common one. Timocles, a poet of the Middle Comedy, says in the *Delos*, alluding to the Harpalus affair:

A. *εἴληφε καὶ Δήμων τε καὶ Καλλισθένης.*
B. *πένητες ἦσαν, ὥστε συγγνώμην ἔχω.*
(Meineke, F.C.M. 591.)

We must judge Æschines by the standard of his own time. Bribery is not unfrequently defended at the present day.

for narrative, with Æschines the reverse is the case. As, however, argument makes greater demands on the attention of the hearer than does narrative, a speech by Demosthenes is harder to follow than is one by Æschines; and as argument gives less scope than narrative for the graces of oratory, the speeches of Æschines, apart from considerations as to the matter, are more pleasing than those of Demosthenes. As regards the emotions, Æschines relied chiefly on pathos, whereas Demosthenes appealed to the indignation of his hearers. Æschines looked by preference to the glorious past, Demosthenes to the calls of honour in the present. Æschines was satisfied if he complied with the observances of religion, Demosthenes was possessed with the necessity of morality. These points of contrast may suffice to indicate that, although between Demosthenes and Æschines there is a difference in degree, there is also an equally important diversity in genius. Æschines has not and does not deserve our sympathies; but more closely than any other orator he approached the merit of Demosthenes.

Amongst the orators of the Macedonian party Demades[1] is next in importance to Æschines. Demades seems to have been about the same age as and to have died two years later than Demosthenes, *i.e.*, B.C. 320. He first appears to our notice after the battle of Chæronea. He had no shame in avowing that Philip had bought him, and, in spite of that fact, he continued until Alexander's death the most important man in Athens, with the exception of Demosthenes. After the destruction of Thebes, Demades saved Athens from the wrath of Alexander; and the Athenians, in return, erected a statue of Demades in the market-place. In natural power Demades was said to exceed Demosthenes, and the judgment of Theophrastus[2] is well known, that as an orator Demosthenes was worthy of Athens, Demades above it. Unlike Demosthenes, he spoke extempore, and consequently none of his speeches have come down to us. As he himself said, his master in rhetoric was the platform; his speeches, therefore, probably lacked art both in the treatment of the subject-matter and the arrangement of his speech. On the other hand, he had the reputation in antiquity[3] of being the most witty of Attic orators; and from this it would seem that the power of his

[1] Δημάδης is contracted from Δημεάδης.

[2] Theophrastus, a pupil of Aristotle, was born B.C. 372 and died about B.C. 283. Of the two hundred or more works which he wrote we possess his "Characters," "Science of Plants," "Natural Causes," "Mineralogy," and "On Fire," more or less complete

[3] "Demades præter ceteros fertur (facetus)." Cicero, *Orat.* 90.



oratory resembled that of Pericles in consisting of pointed and striking expressions. The impression which these made on his hearers may be inferred from the fact of some of them having floated down to our own time. Thus, Macedonia, he said, after the loss of Alexander, was a blinded Cyclops. The theatre-money which the Athenians received was the glue of the democracy. The herald of the city was the public cock. Demosthenes was like the swallows, who will neither let you sleep nor wake you. He defended his policy on the ground that he was steering the wreck of Athens. When the Athenians objected to worship Alexander as a god, he told them to mind that, in their anxiety to defend heaven, they did not lose the earth. When a report came to Athens that Alexander was dead, and the Athenians were much delighted, Demades said, "Alexander is not dead. If he were, the whole world would smell his corpse."

Aristogiton, against whom the second speech of Dinarchus is directed, was probably born about B.C. 370. He was most active after the battle of Chæronea, when he opposed the measures of Hyperides. The names of some of his speeches are given by Suidas and Photius, and quotations from him occur in Harpocration,[1] Athenæus, Tsetzes,[2] and elsewhere. He seems to have employed much abuse and to have set himself up as the "watch-dog of the democracy." Pytheas, born about B.C. 356, began his political life as an anti-Macedonian, but went over on the occasion of the Harpalus affair and became a wealthy man. On the death of Alexander, he, like others of the Macedonian party at Athens, suffered. His end is not known to us. We have quotations from him in Rutilius Lupus.[3] His speeches seem to have been, according to Suidas,[4] insolent and disjointed. The quotations show an affection for antithesis. Menesæchmus succeeded Lycurgus in the administration of finance at Athens, but whether he was an opponent of or belonged to the extreme section of the patriotic party is unknown. We have nothing by him, and he seems to have

[1] In his lexicon to the "Ten Orators." His date is the third or fourth century A.D.

[2] Johannes Tsetzes, about A.D. 1160, was a learned grammarian of Constantinople, the author of Scholia to Homer, Hesiod, Aristophanes, &c., and of a work entitled Χιλιάδες, containing much mixed information, and composed in so-called political verses.

[3] Rutilius Lupus lived in the time of Tiberius, and wrote "De Figuris Sententiarum et Elocutionis;" and in illustration of the figures of thought and speech he quotes from various authors (translating Greek quotations).

[4] *οὐκ ἐκρίθη μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν ῥητόρων* (i.e. in the canon of the "Ten Orators") *ὡς θρασὺς καὶ διεσπασμένος.*



been watery and weak.[1] To Callicrates, the Pergamum school ascribed a speech accusing Demosthenes of illegality; and Philinus' name has come down to us because he opposed the proposal of Lycurgus that statues should be erected of the three great tragedians. Eubulus, the political patron of Æschines, at first opposed to and then a supporter of Philip,[2] is mentioned by Aristotle[3] as quoting Plato in one of his speeches to the effect that many people admitted they were bad. Of Philocrates, one of the ambassadors sent to treat for peace with Philip, who openly boasted of having been bribed, we have not the least fragment left. Hagnonides accused Theophrastus of impiety unsuccessfully,[4] and Phocion of treason successfully, and wrote an Accusation of Oratory.[5] Stratocles, "the most persuasive and pernicious of men,"[6] was conspicuous for the vileness of his servility to Philip and his shameless joy at the disasters of his country. One or two sentences alone of his have survived,[7] and Cicero credits him with being the inventor of the story that Themistocles poisoned himself with the blood of a bull.[8] Of Androtion, against whom a speech of Demosthenes is directed, we have a simile preserved by Aristotle.[9] Cydias made a speech on the colonisation of Samos.[10] Æsion was a fellow-pupil with Demosthenes, and is praised by Aristotle for his metaphors, although to us they appear worn out.[11] To these may be added the names of Democles (or Democlides),

[1] Dionysius, Dinarchus 11, *ὑδαρὴς καὶ κεχυμένος καὶ ψυχρός.*

[2] Dem. 19, 292. *Καὶ ἐν μὲν τῷ δήμῳ κατηρῶ Φιλίππῳ καὶ κατὰ τῶν παίδων ὤμυνες ἢ μὴν ἀπολωλέναι Φίλιππον ἂν βούλεσθαι.* Cf. *De Cor.* 21.

[3] Rhet. i. 15. *οἷον Εὔβουλος ἐν τοῖς δικαστηρίοις ἐχρήσατο κατὰ Χάρητος ᾧ Πλάτων εἶπε πρὸς Ἀρχίβιον, ὅτι ἐπιδέδωκεν ἐν τῇ πόλει τὸ ὁμολογεῖν πονηροὺς εἶναι.*

[4] This we learn from the "Lives of the Philosophers," by Diogenes Laertius (37), who lived about A.D. 200, and came from Laertia in Cilicia.

[5] Quintilian, ii. 17, 15: "Agno quidem detraxit sibi inscriptione ipsa fidem, qua rhetorices accusationem professus est."

[6] Dem. adv. Pant. 994C. *Στρατοκλεῖ τῷ πιθανοτάτῳ παντῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ πονηροτάτῳ.*

[7] Photius, 447A, 17. *ἀροῦται καὶ σπείρεται τὸ Θηβαίων ἄστυ, τῶς συναγωνισαμένων ὑμῖν τὸν πρὸς Φίλιππον πόλεμον.* Rutilius Lupus, ii. 20; "Nam vehementer eorum vitiis invehi non licebat, reticere omnino non expediebat: auspiciose loqui potissimum placebat."

[8] Brutus, 11: "Stratoclem, ut Themistoclis mortem rhetorice et tragice ornare posset, finxisse illum cum taurum immolavisset, excepisse sanguinem patera et eo poto mortuum concidisse." (This impossible story, however, goes back to the time of Aristophanes.) If Stratocles thought this method of death tragic his taste was as defective as his knowledge.

[9] Rhet. iii. 4: *ὅτι ὅμοιος [Ἰδριεὺς ἦν] τοῖς ἐκ τῶν δεσμῶν κυνιδίοις· ἐκεῖνα τε γὰρ προσπίπτοντα ὀάκνειν καὶ Ἰδριέα λυθέντα ἐκ τῶν δεσμῶν εἶναι χαλεπόν.*

[10] Ib. ii. 6.

[11] Ib. iii. 10. *E.g.* "Greece cries aloud."



a pupil of Theophrastus; and probably Archon, in B.C. 316;[1] Leosthenes, a sycophant;[2] Charisius;[3] Euthias, the accuser of Phryne;[4] and Lacritus, of whom mention is made in the speech of [Demosthenes] against Lacritus.[5]

In conclusion it remains for us to say a few words with regard to the causes of the decline of oratory after the death of Demosthenes. They are two: the loss of political freedom and the cessation of the reaction of the public on the artist. The effect of the loss of political freedom on political oratory is readily understood. When the fate of the country was at stake, and when the Assembly had the power of deciding that fate, an orator and a patriot like Demosthenes had the highest incentive to put forth all his powers of oratory in order to move the Assembly to the proper and honourable course of action. When, on the other hand, the Assembly lost its power of deciding what the action of the country should be, and when consequently political debates could have no practical result, then patriotism could supply no incentive to the orator, and deliberative oratory so far as it survived was unreal. Thus the loss of political freedom resulted in the decline of deliberative, the highest kind of oratory. It also brought about the decline of forensic oratory. Its action in this case is not quite so obvious, but it was equally effective. Matter for decision was not withdrawn from the law courts so entirely as it was practically from the Assembly; but all that important part of Attic law which dealt with constitutional, and therefore political points, naturally shared the fate of political debate; and in dealing with the remaining cases the citizens of Athens had in the first place to do only with petty matters, not fitted to develop the moral and intellectual qualities of an orator; and in the second place, even in dealing with these trivial cases they were not acting as a free people giving judgment in accordance with their own free laws. In analysing the superiority of Demosthenes as an orator, we found that it consisted of his moral and intellectual power and the beauty of his language: and these three elements are indispensable for oratory of the highest kind. Applying this test to the oratory of the decline, we see then that forensic oratory never had for its subject issues admitting of fervour, righteous indignation, or self-sacrifice; and that the matters it dealt with were not momentous enough to call for or develop the powers of a great mind. It was only the third element of oratory which admitted of cultivation, and this, separated from the others, ran

[1] Ruhnken, Rut. Lup. 92. [2] Æschines, Falsa Leg. 124.
[3] Rut. Lup. i. 10. [4] Lexicon Seguieranum, 57. [5] 15 and 41.

to rank luxuriance. This excessive attention to form resulting from the negligence of matter is partly what is meant by "Asianism." What we have said with regard to the decline of oratory applies to all Greek oratory, wherever cultivated, until about B.C. 150. As, however, it was in Asia Minor that oratory during this period was principally cultivated, the qualities of the oratory of the decline have come to be grouped together under the term Asianism. After B.C. 150, a reaction in favour of the oratory of Demosthenes set in and was termed "Atticism." It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that "Asianism" was confined to Asia Minor. The seeds of it were sown in Athens even before the time of Demosthenes, for Isocrates cultivated form to the exclusion of matter; and its results are plainly visible in Dinarchus, the last of the ten Attic orators. The first characteristic then of Asianism, excessive attention to the mere language of a speech, is only the development of a tendency already existing in Attic oratory. But although Asianism may thus be traced back to Isocrates, it is very different from him, and it is this difference which constitutes the second characteristic of Asianism. Isocrates worked on a method and with a theory: Asianism had none. Here again Asianism was but the development of a bad tendency already existing in Attic oratory. Æschines, like Isocrates, was lacking in the intellectual and moral elements of oratory, and therefore achieves his greatest success in the domain of mere language. But he differs from Isocrates in the fact that he had no theory, no culture, and but rarely wrote a speech beforehand, while Isocrates would spend ten years in writing an oration. Æschines was a native orator, Isocrates a trained rhetorician. In this respect then Æschines is, rather than Isocrates, the direct ancestor of Asianism. But although Asiatic oratory resembles that of Æschines in being based on no method, there is this difference between them, that the one is successful, the other not. Doubtless the reason partly is that Æschines possessed natural gifts which the Asiatic orators did not: but this does not wholly account for the extravagances of Asianism, and for a full explanation we must turn to the second main cause of the decline of oratory after the death of Demosthenes—the cessation of the reaction of public on artist.

In the case of oratory even more than in any other branch of literature or art is it clear that the artist is reacted on by his public; for the practical object of speaking is conviction, and in order to convince his audience a speaker must neither rise above their comprehension nor sink below their expectations.



The success which spurs to further and higher exertion comes more directly to the orator than to any other artist, as does also the failure which teaches a lesson for the future. The function then of the public in the development of art or literature is to encourage merit and check extravagance. Remove the check, and extravagance develops without restraint. In the period of Asianism the check was removed and the extravagance was developed which was characteristic of Asianism. In order to understand how and why this check was removed, we must call to mind first the difference in size between the city-states of Greece and the countries or nation-states of modern Europe; and secondly, the different means of reaching the public in the two cases. The modern public reads, the ancient public listened. All the citizens of Athens could be gathered together in the theatre to hear a drama: every citizen might be present at the Assembly: great festivals drew a large concourse of people together in whom the essayist or the historian could find an audience. During the creative period of Greek literature the normal way of reaching the public was through their ears, not, as is the case in modern times, through their eyes; for even if most Athenians were able to decipher the letters of the alphabet, they were not in the habit of reading. But every Athenian was in the habit of hearing the oratory of the law courts and the Assembly, the epic and lyrical poetry recited by the rhapsodists, the essays and histories—or portions thereof —read at the great festivals and the dramas performed in the theatre: and in consequence the literary education of the Athenians was, at any rate in the best time of Athens, better than that of a modern nation, even with the advantage which the latter possesses of the printing press. But in the period of the decline of oratory the Greeks were going through a transition stage: the law-courts and assembly were less attended, the theatre was no longer the means of conveying the best tragedies to the public; literature was ceasing to reach the public through the ear, while at the same time the cost of multiplying copies of a manuscript had not yet been so much reduced as to enable the public to become as a rule readers. But although the means of conveying literature, whether orally or by means of manuscripts, were thus temporarily decreasing, the demand was not decreasing. The result was the practice by which the owner of a manuscript collected his friends together and read it aloud to them. We have seen that this had already been done in the case of Isocrates' orations. It was even done in the case of tragedies: tragedians who composed solely for this kind of publicity had

some to be called "Readers." The comedies of Menander were, many of them, written not to be performed, but to be read in this manner at social gatherings. The consequence of this was that an author's works did not become known to the whole or to the larger part of the public, as before and after this time, but only to small groups. That is to say, the check which the great public puts on extravagance was almost entirely taken off; the general recognition of the public was not to be obtained, and thus the artist's greatest incentive was removed. From this point of view it is important to notice that the improvement in taste which brought Atticism into favour and drove out Asianism dates from the time when the systematic employment of slave labour by the Romans for multiplying manuscripts reinstated the general public to its critical function.

The decline of Greek oratory was then due to the development by appropriate conditions of bad tendencies already existing in the oratory of Athens. These tendencies were: to neglect matter for form, as in the case of Isocrates; to dispense with the theory and training necessary for an orator, as in the case of Æschines; and to deviate, when unchecked, from the standard of taste and propriety. The conditions which developed these tendencies were: the decrease, due to the loss of political freedom, in the demand on the moral and intellectual qualities of the orator; and the cessation of the reaction of public on artist, due to the difficulty of publication at that time.



BOOK III.

PHILOSOPHY.

CHAPTER I.

PLATO AND THE PHILOSOPHERS BEFORE HIM.

With the history of philosophy we have nothing here to do. We are concerned with the philosophers only so far as they affected the history of Greek literature, and consequently it will be found that many names of philosophical interest are omitted. In the first place, philosophers like Thales, Socrates, and Pythagoras, who left nothing in writing, find no place in a history of literature. In the next place, philosophers like Xenophanes and Parmenides, who composed in verse, have indeed a place in a history of literature, but not in the section of it dealing with the history of prose. While, finally, Sophists like Antisthenes, who were engaged in philosophical pursuits, but were professedly rhetoricians, find their natural place in the history of prose; but they are links in the chain of oratorical, not philosophical prose, and are not, therefore, dealt with in this section.

The first prose philosopher—if we set aside Pherecydes of Syrus, about whom, as we have seen, there is some doubt—was Anaximander of Miletus, who lived about the beginning of the sixth century B.C., and seems to have been a person of some importance in his native town. His philosophy was of a physical description, and he wrote a work to which (probably in later times) the common title *On Nature* was given. The dialect which he employed was naturally Ionic, and the influence exercised by poetry even on those who strove to write prose, was to be traced in the poetical cast of his writings. About the same time as Anaximander lived Anaximenes, also of Miletus. He probably was acquainted with Anaximander: his philosophy

was physical, his work was entitled *On Nature*, his dialect was Ionic, and his style was bald. As followers of Anaximenes are mentioned Diogenes of Apollonia and Idæus of Himera. More interesting is Heraclitus of Ephesus, who flourished about B.C. 500. He was of royal descent, and is said to have been offered the supreme magistracy of the town, and to have refused it. Whether this is or is not actually true—and we have no trustworthy information about the facts of his life—it accords with the character of the man, as it shows itself in the fragments of his work *On Nature*. He, if not a misanthrope, certainly had a strong contempt for most men. He dedicated his work to Diana, for he did not expect men to appreciate it. He played with children, and asked whether that was not a better occupation than politics. Poets, historians, and philosophers he had no high opinion of. Learning was not the same thing as intelligence, he said, as may be seen in the case of Hesiod, Pythagoras, Xenophanes, and Hecatæus. As for Homer and Archilochus, they deserved public scourging.

Heraclitus was surnamed "the obscure," and although there is no doubt that his obscurity was in its nature and causes much akin to that of Thucydides, and would have characterised him to a large extent even if he had lived at a later stage in the development of prose, still the immaturity of prose composition doubtless added to the difficulty which Heraclitus found in expressing himself. The simple narration of events is a task which prose naturally first comes to perform with ease and success. The exposition of an argument is a matter of more difficulty, and requires time. Even Herodotus shows this, for the speeches which occur in his history are considerably more complicated in syntax and less easy of apprehension than his narrative; while in Thucydides the same thing is even more apparent. His narrative is very clear, but the speeches are difficult. Philosophy is, again, more difficult to express clearly than is an oratorical argument. It contains an argument, like a speech, but it deals much less with concrete ideas, and much more with what is vague, as well as abstract, than oratory does; and consequently in the history of Greek prose literature we find that philosophical prose is later and longer in developing than even oratorical prose, while both philosophy and oratory required much more labour than history to bring them to perfection.

Zeno of Elea was born about B.C. 500, and became the pupil of Parmenides, and one of the greatest of the Eleatic school of philosophers. Most of his life he spent at Elea by preference, though he visited Athens occasionally; he was heard by Socrates,



and instructed Pericles. His life was patriotic, and he rendered great services to his native city. Finally, when he returned from Athens to Elea, he found it in the power of a tyrant, against whom he conspired. The conspiracy was, however, detected; and when he was questioned as to his fellow-conspirators, he, by a bold stroke, named all the adherents of the tyrant. It is said that, availing themselves of the dismay thus caused in the tyrant, the people rose and killed him. The manner of Zeno's death is unknown. Zeno took up the system of Parmenides, and endeavoured to establish it, not directly and positively, but negatively, by refuting the arguments brought against it. For this purpose, or rather in this endeavour, he was led to the use of the dialectical method. This method had, indeed, been used, to a certain extent, before Zeno by Parmenides. Probably the same circumstances compelled Zeno as compelled Parmenides to use it, *i.e.*, the necessity of meeting the arguments brought against the Eleatic philosophy by the keen reasoning powers of the Athenians, whom both Parmenides and Zeno endeavoured to win over to their philosophy. The essence of the dialectical method was to convict an opponent of the falsity of his opinions by reducing them to an absurdity. Thus Zeno endeavoured to show that Opinion was untrustworthy by the absurdities which it led to, and for this purpose he invented his four arguments against the possibility of Motion —Motion being testified to by Opinion, but disapproved by Reason. Of these four arguments, the best known is that known as "Achilles and the Tortoise." A simpler one, however, is the first: "Motion is impossible, because before that which is in motion can reach the end, it must reach the middle point; but this middle point then becomes the end, and the same objection applies to it, since to meet it the object in motion must traverse a middle point; and so on *ad infinitum*, seeing that matter is infinitely divisible."[1]

Anaxagoras was born in Clazomenæ in Ionia about B.C. 500. Unlike Zeno and Parmenides, he took no part in political or practical affairs, but devoted himself solely to philosophy. He allowed nothing to stand between him and his philosophical pursuits. All his worldly substance was sacrificed to this fixed idea, and he declared himself well pleased with the return which philosophy brought him for the sacrifice. If he sought truth thus passionately and devotedly, he showed equal courage and determination in publishing the truth. The sun, he had satisfied himself, was a molten stone of considerable size, and

[1] Lewes' *History of Philosophy*, i. 63.

this opinion he did not conceal. But to the Athenians, who believed that Helios, the sun, was a god, Anaxagoras' declaration was blasphemy and atheism of an unmitigated character; and Anaxagoras, who had long enjoyed the intimacy of Pericles and the acquaintance of all the many men of genius to be met at Athens, was banished. He consoled himself in Lampsacus with the reflection that it was not he who had lost Athens, but Athens that had lost him. He died in Lampsacus at the age of seventy-three.

Finally, we can only make brief mention of some other philosophers. Hippo of Samos lived at Athens in the time of Pericles and belonged to the school of Thales. Aristotle[1] speaks contemptuously of him, and seems to think he hardly deserves the name of philosopher. Cratylus followed the doctrines of Heraclitus and was a tutor of Plato's. Philolaus, a contemporary of Socrates, was the first Pythagorean to commit the tenets of the school to writing, though it is doubtful whether the fragments which have come down to us under his name are genuine. Belissus of Samos continued the teaching of the Eleatic school after Zeno. Hermotimus, Archelaus, and Metrodorus were pupils or followers of Anaxagoras. Democritus of Abdera was born about B.C. 460. He travelled more widely, he boasted, than any other man, and was received when he returned to Abdera with the greatest respect for his travels and his learning. The distinction of founding the philosophy which regards all things as ultimately consisting of atoms is shared between him and Leucippus, whose birthplace is variously given as Abdera, Miletus, or Elea. Amongst the Sophists, in addition to the most famous, Protagoras, Prodicus, Gorgias, Thrasymachus, and Hippias, who have been mentioned elsewhere, we must here give the names of Polus, Euthydemus, and Dionysodorus. Amongst the followers of Socrates must be mentioned Euclides (not the mathematician nor the archon) of Megara, who was present at the death of Socrates; Phædo of Elis and his pupil Menedemus; Antisthenes, who has been mentioned elsewhere; Aristippus, the founder of the Cyrenaic school; while to this school belonged Theodorus, Bion, and Euemerus, who invented a means of explaining mythology as containing the exploits of famous men who after death came to be regarded as gods, which is only now dying out.

Plato, whose real name was Aristocles, but who came to be called Plato because of either the breadth of his brow or the breadth of his shoulders, was born, according to one account, in

[1] *De Anima*, i. 2; *Met.* i. 3.



Ægina, where his father held a colonial allotment, or, according to another more probable account, in Athens. The year of his birth was either B.C. 428 or B.C. 427; and the seventh day of the month Thargelion was celebrated for centuries by his disciples as the day of his birth. On his mother's side he was said to be connected with Solon, while his father was descended from Codrus. Critias, the leader of the Thirty Tyrants, and Charmides were closely related to Plato; and thus he was born and bred in the midst of aristocratic conditions. He owed his introduction into political life to Critias and Charmides, and he seems to have been conscious and proud of his illustrious descent.[1] He had two brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus (who cannot be the Glaucon and Adeimantus of the *Republic*, because the dialogue is supposed to have taken place before his brothers were born), and a sister named Potone.

He was fully educated in the three branches of Greek education—letters, music, and athletics. Dionysius, a grammarian, taught him to read and write; Dracon and Metellus of Agrigentum taught him music; Ariston of Argos gymnastics, in which he is said to have become so proficient as to carry off prizes at the Isthmian and Olympian games. In his youth he is said to have made essays in all kinds of literature—epic, tragedy, dithyramb, and lyric, and in painting as well as in poetry. It is uncertain at what age Plato was instructed in philosophy by Cratylus, the follower of Heraclitus, but perhaps we may regard it as previous to the time when Plato made the acquaintance of Socrates. This event, important in the life of Plato and the history of philosophy, took place probably about B.C. 407, when Plato was twenty years of age; and the acquaintance, formed possibly through Critias, lasted until the time of Socrates' death in B.C. 399. "But," says Mr. Grote, "though Plato may have commenced at the age of twenty his acquaintance with Socrates, he cannot have been exclusively occupied in philosophical pursuits between the nineteenth and twenty-fifth year of his age—that is, between 409–403 B.C. He was carried, partly by his own dispositions, to other matters besides philosophy; and even if such dispositions had not existed, the exigencies of the time pressed upon him imperatively as an Athenian citizen. Even under ordinary circumstances, a young Athenian of eighteen years of age, as soon as he was enrolled on the public register of citizens, was required to take the memorable military oath in the chapel of Aglaurus, and to serve on active duty, constant or nearly constant, for two years in various

[1] *Charm.* 155A, 157E; *Tim.* 20D.

posts throughout Attica for the defence of the country. But the six years from 409–403 B.C. were years of an extraordinary character. They included the most strenuous public efforts, the severest suffering, and the gravest political revolution that had ever occurred at Athens. Every Athenian citizen was of necessity put upon constant (almost daily) military service, either abroad or in Attica, against the Lacedæmonian garrison established in the permanent fortified post of Dekeleia, within sight of the Athenian Acropolis. So habitually were the citizens obliged to be on guard, that Athens, according to Thucydides, became a military post rather than a city. It is probable that Plato, by his family and its place on the census, belonged to the Athenian Hippeis or horsemen, who were in constant employment for the defence of the territory. But at any rate, either on horseback, or on foot, or on shipboard, a robust young citizen like Plato, whose military age commenced in 409, must have borne his fair share in this hard but indispensable duty. . . . From the dangers, fatigues, and sufferings of such an historical decade no Athenian citizen could escape, whatever might be his feeling towards the existing democracy, or however averse he might be to public employment by natural temper. But Plato was not thus averse during the earlier years of his adult life. We know from his own letters that he then felt strongly the impulse of political ambition usual with young Athenians of good family. . . . Whether Plato ever spoke with success in the public assembly we do not know: he is said to have been shy by nature, and his voice was thin and feeble, ill adapted for the Pnyx. However, when the oligarchy of Thirty was established, after the capture and subjugation of Athens, Plato was not only relieved from the necessity of addressing the assembled people, but also obtained additional facilities for rising into political influence through Kritias (his near relative) and Charmides, leading men among the new oligarchy. Plato affirms that he had always disapproved of the antecedent democracy, and that he entered on the new scheme of government with the full hope of seeing justice and wisdom predominant. He was soon undeceived. The government of the Thirty proved a sanguinary and rapacious tyranny, filling him with disappointment and disgust. He was especially revolted by their treatment of Socrates, whom they not only interdicted from continuing his habitual colloquy with young men, but even tried to implicate in nefarious murders, by ordering him, along with others, to arrest Leon the Salaminian, one of their intended victims—an order which Socrates at the peril of his life disobeyed. Thus



mortified and disappointed, Plato withdrew from public functions. . . . His repugnance was aggravated to the highest pitch of grief and indignation by the trial and condemnation of Socrates (399 B.C.) four years after the renewal of the democracy."[1]

After the death of Socrates, Plato commenced his travels by going to Megara, where he associated with Euclides, one of the followers of Socrates, and where also he probably met Hermogenes, one of the Eleatic school. How long a time he spent at Megara is unknown, but from Megara he went to Cyrene on a visit to the mathematician Theodorus, whom he probably had known at Athens, for in the *Theætetus* Plato represents Theodorus as conversing with Socrates. From Cyrene he went to Egypt. It has been disputed that Plato ever really visited Egypt. Our earliest authority for the visit is Cicero;[2] and although Plato's works contain nothing which necessitates the belief that he did visit Egypt, there is nothing improbable in his being tempted when in Cyrene to extend his travels to the Nile. He next visited the South of Italy, where he is said at Tarentum to have met Archytas, and at Locri Timæus, and to have purchased the works of Philolaus at the high price of a hundred minæ. From Italy he went to Sicily, where in Syracuse he was introduced by Dion to the elder Dionysius, brother-in-law of Dion and tyrant of Syracuse. But Plato eventually offended the tyrant, who spared his life indeed at the request of Dion, but handed him over to Pollis, the Spartan ambassador, who sold him as a slave in Ægina, whence the Athenians had been driven out, and where they were especially detested. He was, however, set at liberty by Anniceris, whom he had known at Cyrene, and who purchased him for twenty or thirty minæ,—a price which contrasts suspiciously, or, if it be true, instructively with the price paid by Plato for the works of Philolaus.

Thus Plato returned to Athens about B.C. 387 or 386; and, on his return, "Dionysius wrote, hoping that he would not speak ill of him. Plato contemptuously replied that he had not leisure to think of Dionysius."[3] He was more profitably employed in philosophy. He bought a house and garden close to the precinct of the hero Academus, which contained walks and a gymnasium, and was known as the Academia. Hither men from all quarters of the Greek world came to listen to his discourses and to discourse with him. But, as in his travels, he was a contrast to his great master, who never left Greece

[1] Grote's *Plato*, i. 118–120.
[2] *De Fin.* v. 29; *De Repub.* i. 10.
[3] Lewes, i. 205.

and only once left Athens, so in his mode of teaching he differed from him. Socrates conversed in the streets and the market-place with any one and every one. Plato discoursed in the Academy, a mile from Athens, to a small number only. He did not indeed demand fees, but he accepted presents; and, if payment was not required for permission to hear his discourses, other conditions were probably exacted for admission. Here, for some ten years, Plato continued to teach philosophy, until he went, the elder Dionysius being dead, to Sicily for a second time, in B.C. 367, on the invitation of Dion. The object of his visit was that he might exert his influence over the younger Dionysius, who had succeeded to the tyranny of Syracuse, and produce a philosopher-king. But Dionysius exiled Dion, and Plato had much ado to return to Athens. Some years later, when he was sixty-nine years of age, Plato voyaged a third time to Sicily, in the hope of reconciling Dion and Dionysius; but the attempt failed, and it was fortunate that Plato succeeded in returning once more to Athens. Of the last ten years of his life we know nothing. He died at the age of eighty in B.C. 346, bequeathing his house and garden at the Academia to his nephew Speusippus, and to the Academy an undying name.

The life of Plato is, it must be confessed, less instructive and more disappointing than that of any other great Greek author. The fact that it throws little light on his intellectual development may be in part at least due to defective tradition; what we know of his life is little and lacks the best evidence. This may also account for there being nothing in his life, as we know it, which at all corresponds to or explains his charm as a man of letters. It may also account for the anecdotes, which in late times became numerous, and which represent Plato in a very unfavourable light. In the absence of facts, fictions were invented, and their unfavourable character, if it had no basis in fact, must be ascribed to the heated feelings of partisanship in philosophy. But defective tradition will not account for the fact that, however nobly Plato wrote, he did nothing, as far as we know, great or noble; and it seems probable that, if his life had impressed his contemporaries as being as exalted as his philosophy, or as charming as his literary style, succeeding generations would, in his case, as in others, have invented anecdotes, in default of facts, to give pointed expression to the general love and respect for him. Anecdotes and fictions of various kinds were indeed invented, but they were either malevolent, or else silly inventions of weak minds, which could



only express their admiration for his philosophy by feigning that his father was a god and his mother a virgin.

How different the impression made by his philosophy and by his life is may be seen from what Goethe says of the former: "Plato's relation to the world is that of a superior spirit, whose good pleasure it is to dwell in it for a time. It is not so much his concern to become acquainted with it—for the world and its nature are things which he presupposes — as kindly to communicate to it that which he brings with him, and of which it stands in so great need. He penetrates into its depths more that he may replenish them from the fulness of his own nature than that he may fathom their mysteries. He scales its heights as one yearning after renewed participation in the source of his being. All that he utters has reference to something eternally complete, good, true, beautiful, whose furtherance he strives to promote in every bosom."[1] With this divine spirit Plato yet was neither patriotic as Demosthenes, nor amiable as Sophocles. Philosophy has indeed gained more than Athenian politics lost; but whether the gain to philosophy is gain to the world we may doubt when we reflect that Socrates, though great as a philosopher, was greater as a man. The reasons why Plato withdrew from political life are tolerably evident. By birth and education he was at discord with democracy, while experience of the Thirty Tyrants had shown him the base aspect of oligarchy. Plato, therefore, withdrew from political life. Socrates, we may remark, discharged his duties as a citizen regardless of democracy or oligarchy, and did what was right undaunted by either. The temperament of Plato, however, even as shown in his philosophy, was unfitted for practical life. For practical life some steady and abiding convictions are necessary. Plato had none even in his philosophy. Anything which he affirms in one dialogue may be found to be refuted by him in another. This was partly due to the infancy of philosophy. Plato "is the poet or maker of ideas, satisfying the wants of his own age, providing the instruments of thought for future generations. He is no dreamer, but a great philosophical genius struggling with the unequal conditions of light and knowledge under which he is living."[2] But the conditions are not wholly responsible for the shifting ground of Plato's philosophy. Aristotle found firm ground; and if Plato continually changed his premisses in order to see what conclusions would be the consequence, we must ascribe

[1] Quoted in Ueberweg's *Hist. of Philos.* i. 103 (Morris's English trans.)
[2] Prof. Jowett, *Dialogues of Plato*, I. ix.

this continual change, in part at least, to the temperament of the individual philosopher, as well as to the condition of philosophy at the time. "Plato was not wanting in dogmatic impulse, but he was unable to patiently think out a system; and the vacillating lights which shifted constantly before him, the very scepticism which gave such dramatic flexibility to his genius, made him aware that any affirmation he could make was liable to be perplexed by cross-lights, or would admit of unanswerable objections." [1]

Setting aside the *Letters* of Plato, the authenticity of which is doubtful, his works consist of Dialogues, except the *Apology* and the *Menexenus*, which are speeches. The first question, then, which we have to consider is, why did Plato cast his philosophical work into the form of dialogues? For this there seem to be several reasons. The most obvious answer to our question is afforded by the fact that in all the Dialogues Socrates is the central and most important figure. Plato himself never figures in any of the Dialogues, and is only even referred to twice. Obviously, therefore, it is Socrates and his philosophy —as Plato conceived it—which he set himself to work to reproduce; and as Socrates never expounded his philosophy, but confined himself to questioning others, professing that he himself knew nothing, Plato, in giving even an idealised picture of Socrates, was compelled, as much as was Xenophon, to adhere to historical truth, at least so far as to represent Socrates as conversing, and thus was compelled to write dialogues. In the next place, the form of dialogue was essentially appropriate to Plato's philosophy, since Plato was rather searching for truth than expounding a system. In the third place, Plato was conscious of the inferiority of books to the living word for the investigation of truth. The reader of a book has to make the best of it that he can, and often is in a difficulty which a simple question addressed to the writer would solve. It is impossible to argue with a book; and a matter is rarely fully understood by any one until he has argued it out. To remedy this defect, inherent in the communication of ideas by means of a book, Plato seems to have resolved to throw his philosophy into dialogue form, and thus argue out every question from as many points of view as possible or necessary. Again, whether Plato intended to derive any advantage for the views he put forward from the likes and dislikes of his readers or not, it is a fact that by the way in which he sketches the characters in his Dialogues, he enlists our sympathies for Socrates and very decidedly against his opponents.

[1] Lewes, i. 222.



This leads us to the last reason which we shall assign for the dialogue form of Plato's works. It is that Plato was an artist. He wrote philosophy and he also wrote literature. He had a keen perception for character, and a satirical power as great as that of Archilochus. As an artist, therefore, he was naturally led to select the most artistic form for his work provided by literature; and dialogue had the same advantages over other existing forms of prose as the drama had over other forms of poetry.

We have compared the position of dialogue in prose to that of the drama in poetry, and the comparison is not merely a superficial one, as we shall see if we consider what antecedents dialogue, as written by Plato, had, and what place dialogue takes in the history of Greek literature. We not only find it said several times by ancient authors that Plato had the greatest affection for the Mimes of Sophron, and that it was he who first brought them from Sicily to Athens, but we find that Aristotle classes the Mimes of Sophron and the Dialogues of Plato together as belonging essentially to the same branch of literature. The excellence of Sophron's Mimes consisted in the success with which he depicted character; and we may form some idea at second-hand of his power in this line from the *Adoniazusæ* of Theocritus, which is taken from one of the Mimes. It is, then, in this power of depicting character amusingly that the resemblance between Plato's Dialogues and Sophron's prose Mimes, we can hardly doubt, existed. Thus the comparison of the Dialogues with the drama is not merely the superficial resemblance consisting in the fact that there are interlocutors in each of these forms of literature, but is based on a similarity of aim in both, and on a similarity in the artistic means by which that aim is effected.

In the next place, if we compare the development of prose and poetry in Greek literature, we shall see that the two forms ran parallel, and that dialogue occupies in the one the place of the drama in the other. The first form which poetry took in Greek literature was that of epic, which is essentially narrative in character. The next was lyric, which is individual and subjective. Finally, there arose the drama, which united the spirit of both in a form of its own. So too in prose, the first form which literature took was that of history, which, like epic poetry, is essentially narrative in character. The next form was oratory, which is individual, and is expressive of the speaker's own views. Finally, there arose dialogue, which united the narrative of history with the subjectivity of oratory in a vivid and dramatic form of

its own. Dialogue has over the other forms of prose the same advantages as drama over other forms of poetry: it possesses a greater multiplicity of elements, a greater variety of effects, and a greater wealth of resources. Let us therefore see what light is thrown on Plato's style when it is viewed from the standpoint of the development of Greek prose, and as the highest level attained by Greek prose. If the Dialogues of Alexamenus of Teos, who wrote before Plato, had been preserved, it would have been possible for us to discuss the characteristics of dialogue generally as a form of Greek prose; but as they are lost, Greek dialogue is for us Plato.

Under the head of style are comprised three things at least: the choice and range of words over which the writer has command, that is to say, diction; the structure of his sentences, which differs in complexity, regularity, and clearness, not only in different writers according to their individual capacities, but is also affected by the nature of the subject on which the author is writing; and, finally, the rhythm of the period, which may flow harmoniously or may offend the ear, and which is aided by the subtle repetition of such sounds as are pleasing, or by the harmonious blending of contrasted sound. Now in all three points the style of Plato is neither that of the historians nor that of the orators, but a union of the two. The difference between the historian and the orator in point of style is most obvious in the structure of their sentences. The full and well-rounded periods of the orator are much longer, more full of subordinate clauses, and more impressive in their effect than are the simple sentences in which the historian tells his tale. It is only necessary to compare the artless conversational tone of Herodotus with the sounding periods of Demosthenes' orations to perceive the difference. Each style has its charm, but each runs the danger of monotony. Herodotus, however, is preserved by his complete freedom from artificiality and by the natural beauty of his style. Demosthenes was aware of the danger he ran, and to avoid it he deliberately introduces sentences irregular in their construction—anacolutha—which may relieve the regular succession of elaborate periods. Plato commits himself to neither style, but blends the two. Irregularly constructed sentences are too frequent in his writing to be suspected of being introduced as artificial foils, while there is a tinge of oratory throughout which lifts him above the merely conversational style. This happy blending of the essence of both styles characterises his writing throughout. Setting aside such pieces of work as the *Menexenus*, which is of deliberate design oratorical, we may say



that it is not true that Plato is conversational in some parts of a dialogue and oratorical in others. Even when he passes from dialogue to a long speech by one of the characters, he does not drop the conversational and assume the oratorical style, but he retains the same structure of sentence, the same happy mean between the two styles, as elsewhere.

In rhythm Plato unites the excellences of historical and philosophical prose as in the structure of his sentences He neither writes regardless of rhythm, leaving it to chance whether the sentence happens to be pleasing in sound, nor does he rush into the opposite extreme of producing sentences which, like those of Isocrates, balance each other clause for clause and word for word. Hiatus, which was especially abhorred by Isocrates, Plato admits less freely than do the historians, but more freely than do the orators. What is true of the rhythm and the structure of Plato's sentences is also true of his diction; he neither limits himself to the vocabulary of ordinary conversation, nor does he concern himself to avoid it. But diction is a particularly sensitive element in style; it is affected not only by the rhythm and the structural necessities of a sentence, which perpetually determine whether this or that of two words nearly synonymous is to be used, but it reflects the mood of the writer, is exalted when he is exalted, precise when his thought is exact, and vague when his ideas are dreamy. Now Plato has many moods: he "was sceptic, dogmatist, religious mystic and inquisitor, mathematician, philosopher, poet (erotic as well as satirical), rhetor, artist—all in one, or at least all in succession, throughout the fifty years of his philosophical life. At one time his exuberant dialectical impulse claims satisfaction, manifesting itself in a string of ingenious doubts and unsolved contradictions; at another time he is full of theological antipathy against those who libel Hêlios and Selênê, or who deny the universal providence of the gods; here we have unqualified confessions of ignorance, and protestations against the false persuasion of knowledge, as alike wide-spread and deplorable—there, we find a description of the process of building up the kosmos from the beginning, as if the author had been privy to the inmost purposes of the Demiurgus" (Grote, i. 215). Before, then, we can complete our account of his diction, we must proceed to consider the poetic element in Plato.

According to Aristotle, whose competence as a literary critic is above doubt, Plato's works were a mean between poetry and prose. By this it is not meant that, in some passages, his diction is purely poetical and in others pure prose—although

within certain limits the diction of a passage may vary in this respect according to the nature of the subject-matter—but that throughout a dialogue Plato unites the qualities of prose and poetry, just as the structure of his sentences is throughout half conversational, half oratorical. Now this, which is the characteristic of Plato's diction, is not mere accident or caprice, but has a definite connection with the literary form into which Plato threw his philosophy. That form, according to Aristotle, is the same as that of Sophron's Mimes. In other words, the Dialogues of Plato, although in point of matter philosophical, are works of the imagination in the same way as were the Mimes of Sophron. Not only are the circumstances and scene in which a dialogue is represented as taking place probably due to Plato's invention, but the characters which he gives to the interlocutors, though, like the figures in Sophron's Mimes, to a certain extent suggested by life, are in their artistic shape the creation of the author. But with the exception of Sophron's Mimes, the only works of the imagination known to the Greeks were written in poetry. Prose fiction was unknown. It was then almost inevitable that the first prose works of the imagination should be influenced to a considerable extent by the poetical works on which they were largely modelled and by which they were partly inspired. In fine, the style of Plato is a union of prose and poetry, because his Dialogues were a form of literature uniting the imaginative qualities of the drama with the philosophical purposes of dialectic.

Here it is necessary to point out what poetry it is with which the Dialogues have points of community. Obviously it is with the drama; but the drama includes tragedy and comedy, and the question arises whether it is with comedy or with tragedy that the Dialogues have a resemblance, or whether the resemblance is to the drama generally and not to either tragedy or comedy especially? The Alexandrian grammarians apparently considered that the Dialogues were more like tragedy, for they divided them into trilogies. But in this they committed the error of allowing the matter, which is serious, to influence them in deciding as to the form of the Dialogues.[1] The truth is indicated to us by Aristotle, who, in grouping the Dialogues

[1] On the other hand, "the Phædo is the tragedy of which Socrates is the protagonist, and Simmias and Cebes the secondary performers. No dialogue has a greater unity of subject and feeling. Plato has certainly fulfilled the condition of Greek, or rather of all art, which requires that scenes of death and suffering should be clothed in beauty. . . . There is nothing in all tragedians, ancient or modern, nothing in poetry or history (with one exception), like the last hours of Socrates in Plato" (Jowett, i. 427).



with the Mimes, which were a species of comedy, signifies the connection between the Dialogues and comedy. This is in harmony with the tradition that makes Sophron and Aristophanes the favourite authors of Plato. Plato attacks the Sophists, for instance, with all the force that humour can give, as Aristophanes attacked the leather-sellers and lampmakers who figured in the political world. But Plato's satire has an exquisite finish which Aristophanes rarely equals. For instance, take this side-blow at the Sophists. It occurs at the beginning of the *Protagoras*. Socrates and Hippocrates were going to make a call on Callias in order to see Protagoras, and Socrates, describing it afterwards, said: "We proceeded on our way until we reached the vestibule of the house, and there we stopped in order to conclude a dispute which had arisen as we were going along; and we stood talking in the vestibule until we had finished and come to an understanding. And I think that the doorkeeper, who was a eunuch, and who was probably annoyed at the great inroad of the Sophists, must have heard us talking. At any rate, when we knocked at the door, and he opened and saw us, he grumbled, 'They are Sophists—he is not at home;' and instantly gave the door a hearty bang with both his hands. Again we knocked, and he answered without opening, 'Did you not hear me say that he is not at home, fellows?' 'But, my friend,' I said, 'you need not be alarmed, for we are not Sophists, and we are not come to see Callias, but we want to see Protagoras; and I must request you to announce us.' At last, after a good deal of difficulty, the man was persuaded to open the door."[1] This passage, and still more the way in which Plato draws the character of Thrasymachus, the Sophist, in the *Republic*, compels us to admit the justice of Gorgias' criticism when he spoke of Plato as a terrible satirist and as a new Archilochus. Other conspicuous instances of his satiric powers may be found in the fine parody in the *Phædrus* on the dithyrambic style, in the speech of Agathon in the *Symposium* on the oratorical style, and in the *Menexenus*.

In parodies such as those just mentioned, the style is poetical or oratorical according to circumstances, but the diction of Plato, except when he thus deliberately departs from his ordinary course, is a mixture of prose and poetry; and this is because the form of his Dialogues is a union of dialogue, employed for dramatic purposes, and dialectic used for purposes of philosophy. The advantages of this new form of composition as compared with any pre-existing form are obvious in its vivacity and variety.

[1] *Protag.* 384 (Jowett's trans.)

But it also labours under defects. "With regard to the dramatic power exhibited, there has perhaps been little exaggeration in the praise of critics; but there has been an oversight in regard to the sudden cessation of the dramatic ventriloquence (so to speak), which, having animated the *mise en scène* of the characters, disappears as soon as the business of the dialogues begins. In the introduction the characters speak; in the argument it is Plato who speaks just what the needs of his argument require, and the debaters, instead of debating, assent, inquire, and expound, but rarely speak dramatically."[1] This criticism is true of the *Republic*, for instance, and some of the longer Dialogues, but by no means of all. In the *Protagoras*, for example, the interlocutors maintain their character throughout. But the fact remains that frequently Plato sinks the artist in the philosopher, and, in order to make his writing fill as satisfactorily as possible the place of the living word, he loads his work with vain repetitions, and justifies the criticism of Montaigne, who found the Dialogues of Plato drag, thought he stifled his subject too much, and complained "of the time spent in vain interrogatories by a man who had such far better things to say."

The form of the Dialogues and their diction are intermediate between prose and poetry; the structure and harmony of the sentences are intermediate between those of oratory and those of ordinary conversation. These, then, are the characteristics of the Dialogues considered as a branch of Greek literature; but we must also endeavour to form some idea of the literary qualities of Plato himself. Here, again, we shall base our remarks upon Aristotle. According to him (*Pol.* II. iii. 3), four qualities distinguish the Dialogues: elevation, finish, originality, and the spirit of inquiry. The first quality, so far as it refers to style, implies that the Dialogues, though conversational, are not vulgar; that the structure of the sentences, though not artificial, is not slipshod; that in both respects the Dialogues are above the common. As regards the matter of the Dialogues, they are elevated in tone, and are marked by what Greek critics called *êthos*, that is, their tone is such as to excite to virtue and turn from vice. The finish which Plato's work shows is to be seen in the polish of his satire (Plato impales his victims "as though he loved them"); in his exquisite drawing of character (contrast his Socrates with the incomplete and inartistic picture given by Xenophon); in the ease and grace with which the philosophical subject of a dialogue

[1] Lewes, i 198.



is introduced;[1] in the harmonious proportions of such a dialogue as the *Symposium*, with its Greek purity of form; or in the grouping and contrast of the characters of the First Book of the *Republic*. Plato's originality shows itself alike in form and matter. The Dialogues of Alexamenus have perished so completely that we may safely conjecture that they can have impaired but little Plato's claim to have invented philosophical dialogue. The merit of this original service to mankind, though great, is apt to be overlooked. It gave philosophy as high a rank in literature as it occupies in knowledge, and it gave to philosophical discussion a literary interest serviceable alike to philosophy and to literature. The same creative power shows itself elsewhere in the additions which Plato made both to the technical phraseology of metaphysics and to the general vocabulary of the Greek language. As regards the matter of his works, Plato's originality consists not so much in any positive addition of permanent value that he made to the sum of human knowledge, as in the fact that he was "a maker of ideas" and provided "the instruments of thought for future generations."

The fourth quality ascribed to Plato by Aristotle, the spirit of inquiry, is one exhibited in the matter of the Dialogues, though their form was appropriate to it, and was doubtless partly determined by it. The spirit which examines all things and investigates each thing from every point of view; which is dissatisfied, not with negative results, but only if it leaves any argument or any method of search untouched—this is Plato's spirit of inquiry, and is a mode of philosophy for which, employing, or rather consisting of, dialectic, as it does, dialogue is the appropriate form. The Dialogues of Plato were divided by Thrasyllus, a rhetorician of the time of Tiberius, into two classes, dialogues of search and expository dialogues. These classes fail to include all the dialogues, but of those which properly belong to them, the majority, according to Mr. Grote, come under the head of dialogues of search. This, however, is a matter to be decided by philosophers, and cannot properly be here discussed. Nor is it necessary here to more than mention the fact that Schleiermacher arranged all the dialogues in accordance with a philosophic scheme which he imagines that Plato conceived in his youth, and devoted his life to working out. This hypothesis is improbable, incapable of proof (it pro-

[1] The art of concealing art "is nowhere more perfect than in those writings of Plato which describe the trial and death of Socrates. Their charm is their simplicity, which gives them verisimilitude; and yet they touch, as if incidentally, and because they were suitable to the occasion, on some of the deepest truths of philosophy" (Jowett, i. 427).

ceeds on internal and subjective grounds), and is rejected by other students of Plato, who bring forward each a scheme of his own. Another theory, equally subjective, but more generally intelligible, is that of Munk, who conceives that Plato intended in the Dialogues "to depict the life and working of a philosopher, in successive dramatic exhibitions, from youth to old age. The different moments in the life of Socrates, indicated in each dialogue, mark the place which Plato intended it to occupy in the series" (Grote, i. 181). But with the classifications based on philosophical grounds we have nothing to do. External proof as to the date of composition does not exist in the case of a single dialogue; and the historical events mentioned in a dialogue give us no information, as sometimes the same dialogue is represented in one passage as having been held in one year, and in another passage as having been held at a wholly different time. So far as the purely literary study of the Dialogues throws any light on their relative order, we may notice that in some dialogues Plato is at pains to avoid hiatus, in others not; and that in the *Laws*, which, on other grounds, are generally admitted to be amongst the latest of Plato's works, the hiatus is most carefully avoided. Other dialogues which show the same avoidance of hiatus, and are therefore probably among the later works, are the *Philebus*, *Timæus*, *Critias*, *Sophistes*, *Politicus*, and *Phædrus*.[1]

Finally, we must speak briefly of the question as to the authenticity of the works that go under Plato's name. In the reign of Tiberius, Thrasyllus drew up a list of the works which, according to him, were universally regarded as genuine in antiquity. This list may be identical with that of the works recognised as genuine in the library at Alexandria, and the library list may have been obtained from the Platonic school at the Academy. But although an authentic canon may have been thus transmitted to the time of Thrasyllus, it is more likely that spurious works came to be regarded as genuine, and were incorporated in the list of Thrasyllus. This probability is considerably strengthened when we find that even Thrasyllus himself doubts the genuineness of one of the works included in his list. But if we reject the list of Thrasyllus, the question remains, what works of those ascribed to Plato are genuine? and no completely satisfactory answer is forthcoming. Aristotle

[1] It should perhaps be stated that Thrasyllus arranged the Dialogues in groups of four, which he called Tetralogies, and that Aristophanes of Byzantium (the librarian of Alexandria, who lived between 260–184 B.C.) is said by Diogenes Laertius to have arranged them into Trilogies. But both arrangements were purely fanciful.



mentions many of Plato's works, and those which he mentions may safely be regarded as genuine. But he does not mention all, and we cannot infer anything from his silence. He never expressly mentions the *Protagoras*, yet there is no doubt that the *Protagoras* is genuine. Again, he sometimes mentions or quotes from some of the dialogues that we possess, but does not expressly say that they are the work of Plato: these dialogues, then, may or may not be genuine. They may contain the teaching of Plato, and be the work of some members of the Platonic school. Finally, there are some dialogues which, both in antiquity and in modern times, have been universally rejected. Such are the *Axiochus*, *Demodocus*, *Sisyphus*, *Eryxias*, *Halcyon*, *Midon*, *Phœaces*, *Chelidon*, *Hebdome*, and *Epimenides*. Dialogues which may or may not be genuine are the *Lesser Hippias*, *First Alcibiades*, and the *Menexenus*. The *Letters*, although defended by Grote, are rejected by every one else. They contain gross historical errors and many plagiarisms.

CONCLUSION.

THE history of Greek literature is the proper introduction to the study of literature in general, not merely because of the excellence of Greek literature in itself, and because it has influenced both directly and indirectly all subsequent European literatures, but because the causes which determine the development of literature in Greece are more easily discernible and more obvious in their operation than is the case in any other country. If many a village Hampden, because his lot forbids, withstands no greater foe than "the little tyrant of his fields," many a Milton also remains mute and inglorious, or, if he finds a voice, achieves glory in some other branch of literature than epic poetry. Of all men of genius, the man of letters might seem to be the least fettered by external conditions. The range of thought is limited neither by time nor space. It is the peculiar power of the imagination to transport us out of the age and country, nay, out of the very world to which we belong. Given the power, which genius possesses, of expressing his thought or fancy, the poet might seem to be beyond any control save his own, and consequently produce any kind of poetry in any age or in any country. Yet, even here, where the mind of man has a freedom to which it is hard to conceive limits, law and order rule.

When a cannon is levelled horizontally, the shot, whether gently dropped from the muzzle or discharged with the full force of the most powerful explosive, takes precisely the same time to reach the ground. Gravity, according to its law, acts no more and no less on the rushing shot than on the shot which is dropped from the cannon's mouth. So, too, however far thought or the imagination is projected, it never escapes beyond the bounds of its laws. Land and language, race and place, the community to which the author addresses himself and for whose approbation he looks, the means by which he addresses it, the literature which existed before him—all these things help to determine the direction which genius takes; and the operation of these and other causes on the literary genius of a nation constitutes the history of its literature. But the more complex civilisation grows, and the longer the past which any generation is heir to, the more difficult it is to distinguish the causes which



substantially affect the evolution of literature from those which do not. It is, therefore, an advantage to study a literature in which the factors of the problem are simpler and less obscured; and such a literature is that of Greece in classical times. The course of Greek literature did not suffer perturbations from the influence of any other nation's literature; the civilisation of Greece was in the main its own. It is to Greece and to Greek literature alone that we must look for the causes which determined its nature and regulated its development.

First among these causes we will consider the country in which the Greeks lived. The effects of the physical conditions of a land on its inhabitants did not escape the Greeks' fine sense of observation. Not only did men of science like the physician Hippocrates systematically work out the effects of the physical environment on the organism of the nation, not only did philosophers like Plato take into account the surroundings of youth as a factor in education, but Herodotus calls special attention to the effect of favourable physical conditions on the colonies in Asia Minor. And the exhilarating influence of the atmosphere of Athens, the depressing influence of the heavy air of Bœotia on the inhabitants of the two countries, were a common-place among the dramatic poets. The physical character of a country acts on literature directly and indirectly: directly by its beauty, which is reflected in the literature; indirectly by its influence on the social, political, and moral development of the community to which the author belongs. The direct influence of nature on Greek poets has been sometimes overlooked and sometimes denied. But the sense of beauty which the Greeks possessed to a greater extent than any other people could not fail to be caught by the exceptionally beautiful natural surroundings in which they lived; and their literature, at any rate their poetry, bears abundant testimony to the fact. Small though Greece is, it contains a greater variety, both in harmony and contrast, of natural beauty than most countries, however great. Its latitude gives it a southern climate, while its mountains allow of the growth of a vegetation found in more northern climes. Within a short space occur all the degrees of transition from snow-topped hills to vine-clad fountains. And the joy with which the beauty of their country filled the Greeks may be traced through all their poetry. In Homer we need only refer to the descriptions of the garden of Alcinoüs and the cave of Calypso, and the similes drawn from nature throughout. In the lyric poetry, whether of Sappho or of Alcman, we find a sympathy with nature, animate and

inanimate, and a power of expressing that sympathy, which is not surpassed in modern literature. In tragedy, what need to refer to Sophocles' description of his native Colonus? in comedy, to the *Birds* of Aristophanes? The attitude of the Greek to nature was not that of modern times; the contrast between nature and the corruptions of civilisation only came into literature when civilisation had become corrupt. The classical Greek did not regard himself as something apart from nature, but appeals to her as Prometheus appeals, or took leave of her as Ajax bids farewell—as one of her children.

The two leading facts in the physical aspect of Greece are the sea and the mountains. As Europe is the most indented and has relatively the longest coast-line of all the continents of the world, so of all the countries of Europe the land of Greece is the most interpenetrated with arms of the sea. We have now to consider how these distinctive features acted indirectly on Greek literature through their effects on the moral, political, and social condition of the Greek people.

> "Two voices are there: one is of the Sea,
> One of the Mountains; each a mighty voice:
> In both from age to age thou didst rejoice;
> They were thy chosen music, Liberty!"

Both voices spoke impressively to Greece, and her literature echoes their tones. So long as Greece was free and the spirit of freedom animated the Greeks, so long their literature was creative and genius marked it. When liberty perished, literature declined. The field of Chæronea was fatal alike to the political liberty and to the literature of Greece.

The love of liberty was indeed pushed even to an extreme in Greece; and this also was due to the physical configuration of the country. Mountains, it has been said, divide; seas unite. The rise and the long continuance in so small a country of so many cities, having their own laws, constitution, separate history, and independent existence, can only be explained by the fact that in their early growth they were protected, each by the mountains which surrounded it, so effectually, and the love of liberty in this time was developed to such an extent, that no single city was able to establish its dominion over the others, as Rome did in Italy, and create a Greek empire. With the political effects of the mountains of Greece we have, however, only to do so far as they affected the literature; and their effect on it was very great. Every one of the numerous states, whose separate political existence was guaranteed by the mountains,



was actually or potentially a separate centre of civilisation and of literature. In some one of these states each kind of literature could find the conditions appropriate or necessary to its development Even a state which produced no men of literary genius itself might become the centre at which poets collected and encourage the literature it could not produce, as was the case with Sparta, to which Greece owed the development of choral lyric.

But the service which Sparta, for instance, rendered to literature by attracting lyric poets to herself and encouraging the growth of choral lyric, would have been, if not impossible, at least materially diminished, had not the sea afforded an easy means of communication, and united the colonies with the mother-land. The eastern basin of the Mediterranean has deserved well of literature, for it brought Greece into communication with her colonies on the islands and on the surrounding coasts, and enabled the numerous Greek cities to co-operate in the production of a rich and varied literature, instead of being confined each to a one-sided and incomplete development. The process of communication began in the earliest times, as is shown by the spread of epic literature. Originating in Ionia, it was taken up in Cyprus, where the epic called the *Cypria* was composed, and at the beginning of the sixth century it was on the coast of Africa in the colony of Cyrene. The rapid spread of elegiac poetry is even more strikingly illustrated, for we find Solon in Athens quoting from his contemporary Mimnermus of Colophon. Choral lyric, which originated in Asia Minor, was conveyed to Sparta by Alcman, and by Simonides of Ceos all over the Greek world. But although in early times we find as much interchange and reaction in the colonies amongst themselves as between the colonies and the mother-country, with the advance of time we find the centripetal tendency becoming dominant. The mother-country becomes more and more the centre to which all literature and art gravitate. At the beginning of the sixth century Sparta attracted poets from the colonies in Asia Minor, but the only form of literature which Sparta rewarded and encouraged was choral lyric. No such narrowness characterised Athens, and when she established herself as the intellectual capital of Greece, all men of genius received a welcome there, and we find all forms of literature deserting their native homes, even their native dialects, to come to Athens. Iambic poetry, which was the work of Archilochus, born in the island of Paros, found its finest development in the dialogue of Athenian drama. The dithyramb,

which was brought by Arion from Lesbos to Greece, was adopted in Attica, and there developed into tragedy. Choral lyric, which grew under the hands of Simonides of Ceos, and of Alcman before him, was recalled from the circumference of the Greek world, where it had been at the service of tyrants, to add to the beauty of Attic drama and to the enjoyment of the Athenian democracy. Comedy, which Epicharmus had developed in Sicily, deserted that island for Athens. Prose, which the Ionian logographers had painfully pioneered; history, which has Herodotus of Halicarnassus for father; rhetoric, the seeds of which were sown, on the one hand in Sicily, on the other in Ionia; philosophy, which germinated in Sicily, Ionia, and Elea on the west coast of Italy—all found their way to Athens, there to be carried to a height of perfection impossible in their places of origin. But this was the beginning of the end. As long as literature had many centres, there was no danger of all falling by a single stroke; but when it was centralised in Athens, and the blow delivered by Philip at Chæronea had fallen on Athens, classical Greek literature perished in a generation.

It is somewhat difficult to distinguish race-qualities from the characteristics impressed on a people by the conditions under which it lives, since the latter by accumulation and transmission from generation to generation eventually become race-qualities. Thus the Spartans possessed qualities common to them and the Dorians, of whom they were a branch, and also qualities peculiar to themselves, which distinguish them from other Dorians. But the latter qualities, at any rate, so far as they affect the relation of Sparta to literature, seem to be the work of the peculiar conditions under which the Spartans lived. When the Dorians invaded Greece cannot be accurately determined. The invasion belongs to prehistoric times. It seems to have been subsequent, if not to Homer, at least to the state of things depicted in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. When, however, it did take place, those Dorians who lodged themselves in Sparta, and became known to history as Spartans or Lacedæmonians, found themselves surrounded by a hostile population, to whose attacks for an uncertain but considerable period they were perpetually exposed. This pressure, exercised for generations, not only necessarily made the Spartans a military people—it made them a military people and nothing else. The ordinary life of a Spartan citizen was that of a soldier in camp or garrison, rather than that of a member of a political community, and this system of life was highly unfavourable to literature. It crushed out individuality; for obedience, not independent action, is the quality needed in



a soldier; and it inculcated silence, not discussion. Spartan—"laconic"—brevity is proverbial, and its reason is obvious. The word of command is short and sharp, and must be received with the briefest indication that the subordinate understands his superior. At first, the connection between Spartar brevity and Spartan sterility in literature is not obvious, for with us a man may achieve literary success and speak but little. But in Greece literature was oral. Not only the orator, but the epic poet, the lyric poet, the historian, and the philosopher themselves delivered their words to the audience, not on paper, but with their own voices. Where, therefore, as in Sparta, the opportunities of speech were reduced to a minimum, and speech itself was necessarily and deliberately discouraged, there could be but little chance for literary genius to struggle into light. But if Sparta thus debarred herself from producing literature, she at least encouraged it to a certain extent; and the extent to which she could encourage it was strictly defined by her exclusively military and one-sided growth. An individual existence the Spartan was not allowed to have; collectively the citizens might assent to the legislative proposals of the senate, and take the field under the king's command. Any kind of literature, therefore, which was to flourish in Sparta must be such as could be participated in by a large body acting under the word of command; and such a kind of literature was forthcoming in the lyric poetry, which was performed by choruses.

Other Dorians, not hemmed in by such unfavourable conditions as the Spartans, did provide some contributions to the literature of Greece, and in the nature of their contributions we may detect the qualities of the race. The Dorians in Sicily sowed the seeds of rhetoric and carried comedy to considerable perfection. Of imagination the race seems destitute: it did not produce poets. On the other hand, the race is eminently practical as well as prosaic, and their humour was of a nature which corresponded to these qualities. Personal peculiarities struck them as comic, and practical jokes afforded them great amusement. The highest altitude at which comedy could survive amongst them was the level of a modern burlesque. Their perception, within its own range—the practical affairs of life—was quick. Repartee was brisk, and when circumstances brought the law-courts into great activity, the rapidity of thrust and parry, which was inherent in the race, at once found its proper practical application in the service of litigation. But the forensic oratory which originated in Sicily had to be transplanted to Attica and to be cultivated with Attic taste before

it could take its place among the branches of the national literature.

The Æolians form a contrast both to the Spartans and to the Athenians. The development of individuality is as characteristic of the Æolians as its absence is of the Spartans. But the Æolians, first of all Greeks, possessed a cavalry, and this means that they were wealthy and aristocratic; for in Greece, as in the early periods of every nation's history, the advantage in combat ensured to the class wealthy enough to have horses to fight on resulted in the elevation of that class above others and the formation of an aristocracy. This gives us the distinction between the Æolians and the Athenians: among the former, individuality was developed in the aristocracy alone; among the latter, in all the citizens. The Æolians added to the crown of Greek literature one of the brightest of its jewels—lyric poetry, as we understand lyric in modern times, that is, the expression of the poet's feelings, on any subject whatever, as his individual feeling. It is further to the honour of the Æolian aristocracy that its social constitution assigned woman a rank and allowed her a freedom which she enjoyed in no other Greek race; and the merited reward of this enlightenment was not wanting, for to the Æolian race belongs the woman who in poetry ranks above all women, in lyric poetry above all poets, Sappho.

But it was the Ionians who rendered the greatest services to Greek literature. They were a quick-witted race, full of enterprise, full of resources. In them we see reflected the character of the sea, as in the Dorians the character of the mountains. The latter partook of the narrowness and exclusiveness of their own homes, hemmed in by mountains, and by them protected from the incursion of strangers and strange innovations. The Ionians, on the other hand, were open as the sea, and had as many moods. They were eminently susceptible to beauty in all its forms, to the charm of change and to novelty. They were ever ready to put any belief or institution to the test of discussion, and were governed as much by ideas as by sentiments. Keenness of intellect, taste in all matters of literature and art, grace in expression, and measure in everything distinguished them above all Greeks. The development of epic poetry, the origin of prose, the cultivation of philosophy, are the proud distinction of the Ionian race.

In Athens we have the qualities of the Ionian race in their finest flower. Inhabiting a city by the sea, the Athenians were in open communication with all the eastern colonies of Greece,



while the main routes to the colonies of the west converged at Athens. The capacities of the sea were developed fully by the Athenians. Their empire was a maritime empire, and their commercial supremacy was established by the sea. It was the naval victory of Salamis which made democracy inevitable, and gave to every citizen of Athens the right to help in governing the city which he had helped in saving. The citizens into whose hands was thus given the government of this great city were essentially an enlightened people. No seed of science, art, or literature was sown among them in vain; no attempt to improve or embellish life was rejected by them because it was unknown to their fathers or foreign to their prejudices. So far as the Athenians differ from the Ionians, of whom they were a branch, the difference is the same as that between Greece and the colonies generally. The Athenians were less original but more receptive than the Ionians on the coast of Asia Minor. If they were less ready at striking out a new line, they were more persistent in working out an old one. If they invented no instrument, they added new strings to the instruments invented by others, and extracted tones of beauty unsuspected by the inventors. Eminently enlightened, they not only appreciated and welcomed every form of literature which existed in Greece, but they extracted the essence from epic, iambic, and lyric poetry, and, by uniting them in the drama, gave them a form which gratified the eye as well as the ear, and marked the culminating point of Greek poetry. In prose their taste was equally catholic, and their services to literature equally great. They furnished Herodotus with his most appreciative audiences; their city was the centre to which rhetoricians and philosophers congregated from all quarters of Greece. History was given a profound and scientific basis by Thucydides; philosophy was given by Socrates the direction which it has since ever followed, by Plato a literary form which it has since never surpassed; and finally, oratory, developed by a series of artists in words, reached its zenith in the speeches of Demosthenes.

Although, up to this point, our object has been to see only how Greek literature was affected by the race-qualities of the Greeks and the physical conditions under which they lived, we have been compelled incidentally to take into consideration the influence of political and social conditions. But before we can estimate their influence fully, or fully comprehend the influence of the Greek language on Greek literature, we must have some idea of the way in which, in classical times, literature was communicated to the public. It is a matter of doubt whether

writing was even known in Greece much before B.C. 700. It is probable that for a century and a half after that date it was only used for purposes of commerce and correspondence. For a century after that it seems as though the only use it was to literature was to enable an author to write out a single copy of his works. It is only about B.C. 430 or 420 that we find copies of manuscripts multiplied and diffused, and for a century after that time it was not to the reading public that authors addressed themselves. In other words, writing seems not to have been known during the period of epic poetry, not to have been used for literary purposes during the age of lyric (except towards the end), to have been used by the early historians, philosophers, and dramatists only as an aid to composition, and not to have been needed as a means of publication by the orators, with whom classical Greek literature ends.

Greek literature, then, was communicated to the public orally, not by means of the multiplication and diffusion of manuscripts. But oral communication implies the collection of an audience to whom the author can address his words; and the occasion on which, the purposes for which, the place in which, and the frequency with which the audience is collected, exercise a considerable influence on the literary form of the work presented to it. Further, the reaction of the audience on the author being more immediate, was more effectual than it is even in these days of the printing-press. Let us then see the nature of the audiences to whose approval the various kinds of Greek literature were submitted, and their influence on the development of that literature. In the earliest times, the period of epic poetry, it was to the kings and chieftains that the poets looked for patronage, and it was in a chieftain's hall that the minstrel found an audience to appreciate his poetry and reward his efforts. It was not unnatural, therefore, that the minstrel chose for his theme the exploits and adventures of famous heroes in whom his patrons saw the mythical reflection of themselves, and to whom, in many cases, they traditionally traced their origin. When this state of things passed away, literary genius found the most favourable conditions for its development in another race and another place. The culture of the Æolians and the natural beauties of Lesbos fostered the growth of lyric poetry. But the audience to whom this kind of poetry was addressed was more exclusive than were the audiences who listened to epic poetry. The latter consisted of all the household of the chieftain, which was addressed by a wandering minstrel. The audience of lyric poetry consisted of the Æolian aristocracy exclu-



sively, who were addressed by a member of their own order, possessing the same general views of life and society as themselves. Hence the personal and intimate character of lyric poetry, which was the outpouring of the poet's heart to those on whose sympathy he could confidently rely. But in other countries, both at the same time as, and later than, the development of personal lyrics in Lesbos, the social and political conditions were different, produced a different kind of audience, and resulted in a different kind of lyric. In Sparta, for instance, as we have seen, the citizens were, by the bonds of their condition, only allowed to participate in literature collectively. For them something was required, in the production of which a large body could partake, and to which the whole body of citizens could listen at once. These conditions resulted in the development of choral lyric. The rise of democracy at Athens, and the consequent demand for a form of literary entertainment which the whole population of the great city could simultaneously be present at, were conditions which forced the growth of the drama. But dramas were only produced in Athens at stated and somewhat long intervals, while the people became more and more eager for literary food, and the result was that the assembly and the law-courts, in which the people found themselves gathered with great frequency, became the means of gratifying the literary instincts of the Athenians. Orators sought to impart to prose an artistic beauty of its own which should rival that of poetry; and, under the sound and watchful criticism of their audience, the Athenian people, they at last succeeded.

Thus the oral communication of classical Greek literature and the conditions under which it was communicated together materially influenced the course of its development. To these causes must also be assigned their contribution to the excellence of Greek literature. Aristotle rightly recognised that, on the whole and in the long-run, the judgment of a large public was more sound, less liable to eccentricity, one-sidedness, and exaggeration, than are cliques and sections. Now, in Athens, oratory and the drama were necessarily thus subjected to the criticism of the whole people, who, as far as we may judge by results, discharged the function of criticism with judgment and discrimination. This was, doubtless, partly due to the natural taste of the Athenians; but taste requires cultivation, and it is the oral communication of literature to which we must ascribe the cultivation of the Athenians. If an Athenian at times heard inferior dramas and inferior oratory, he could not go to



the assembly and the theatre without also hearing great dramatists and fine orators; whereas, at the present day, a man may read and read, and not read the masterpieces which alone cultivate the mind. Further, the literature which is read costs money; the literature to which the Athenians listened was free. Finally, the value we have here put upon oral communication is confirmed by the decline literature underwent when it ceased to be communicated orally. The narrowness of the reading public, to whom authors of the Alexandrian times addressed themselves, is reflected in the narrowness of their point of view, and the incapacity of this narrow public to discharge its literary and critical functions seems indicated by the fact that it did not succeed in developing any writer of genius.

Bearing in mind that classical Greek literature was designed to be uttered aloud, and was necessarily tested by the ears of the audience, whose sense of beauty its sound had to gratify, we can estimate the importance of the chief characteristics of the language to the literature. In the changes which all languages, not dead, undergo, one of the most important causes is man's desire to express himself with the least amount of trouble. Some words are found to be as intelligible when docked of a letter as when they are pronounced in full; and gradually the letter is dropped. Some sounds are hard, some easy to repeat in quick succession, and, accordingly, when such combinations occur in a word, one of the sounds, if hard to repeat, is altered, "dissimilated," or a sound easy to repeat is substituted for some other sound, which is thus "assimilated" to the other. The result in all cases is a word easier to pronounce in the new than in the old form. But although the unconscious striving after ease in pronunciation is at the bottom of many changes, there is also at work a tendency to gratify the ear by making changes which result in producing sounds pleasant in themselves to listen to, and by avoiding sounds of the opposite description.[1] On the strength of this latter instinct mainly depends the beauty of a language as judged by the ear; and the instinct was strong in the Greeks and potent

[1] Ultimately, the conception of beauty in sound may, perhaps, be traced back to ease of pronunciation. Movements are graceful which are produced with the minimum of effort. Flowing lines are more graceful than angles because they suggest the idea that they have been produced with more ease. So, too, the reason why some sounds are pleasant to the ear may be that they suggest the idea that they flow without effort. Of course, this would only apply, or apply mainly only, to spoken sounds. Singing and music require other explanations, though the difference in effort between singing, which is pleasant, and screaming, which is not, points in the same direction.



in the formation of their language. Whether the disappearance of the *w* sound of the digamma and the *y* sound of the iota was determined by a proper exercise of instinct or only by a capricious repugnance, the aversion to the hissing sound of a succession of sibilants was certainly a gain to the beauty of the language.[1] Even clearer cases of gain are the systematic avoidance of a congeries of consonants, and the repugnance to ending a word with a consonant, and thus bringing it up with a jerk at the end. Assimilation and dissimilation both of consonants and vowels were used also with a sense of the beauty to be got out of them. The vowel system was so developed as to give variety and lightness to the language. In a word of several syllables, instead of repeating the same vowel sound in syllable after syllable, so that the sound of the word was dull and monotonous, the vowels were varied. When once this variation of vowels had established itself in certain words, the influence of analogy reinforced the strength of the original tendency, and the dissimilation of vowels became the recognised principle regulating the addition of terminations (such as those of the comparative and superlative of adjectives) and the process of word-formation.

The two principles which underlie the production of things beautiful, whether in painting, music, or literature, are variety in harmony and variety in contrast. These two qualities are conspicuous in the Greek language, judged by the ear; and to them must be added the quality which characterised Greek art generally—measure in all things. The Greeks allowed play to the tendency to express themselves with as little trouble as possible, but they did not allow it to proceed so far as to militate against intelligibility. They rejected consonants which were hard to pronounce or disagreeable to hear, but they stopped in this process at the point beyond which it would have been impossible to go without depriving the language of the variety of contrast between the vowel and the consonantal systems. They inherited a vowel system in which the variety of contrast existed, and they supplemented it by differentiating the broad sound of the *a* so as to add variety in harmony. This, then, was the instrument which Greek authors received from the Greek people, and with which they had to express their thoughts in sounds which would satisfy the ear of the nation which had created so fair a language. What the instinct of the people had done for the words of the language, the

[1] Of this aversion the Greeks were conscious. Euripides was ridiculed by the comedians for offending against it.



literary men in their turn did for the sentence and the period. The sentence, and then the period, first in poetry and afterwards in prose, were, as regards the beauty of their sound, gradually invested with the same variety of harmony and contrast, the same balance, ease of pronunciation, and gratification to the sense of hearing, as already marked the separate words of the language. This constitutes one of the beauties of Greek literature, and is a beauty intimately connected with its oral communication. Modern literature is taken in by the eyes rather than the ears; and modern readers so rarely hear literature, that it is sometimes even necessary to explain that prose quite as much as poetry has its own rhythms, and that in the mere sound of a sentence beauty may reside.

But although art may take words as its material and create beauty out of them as well as out of musical sounds, the practical object of language is to express our thoughts. We have therefore to consider how the Greek language performed this its main function. The first and greatest quality of the language from this point of view is its clearness. Both in the formation of words and in the structure of its sentences it is transparent. As regards the former, a word in Greek at once shows by its form what other words it is by derivation connected with, what is the root of the word, how it is formed from the root, and what modification in meaning the root has undergone along with its modification in form or with its extension by the addition of a termination. The structure of the sentence is also transparent. In common with other inflectional languages, it possessed the advantage of stamping each word as it proceeded from the mouth of the speaker with the inflectional mark which indicated its position and function in the sentence. But it is not in all inflectional languages that the structure of the sentence can be thus readily seen through; and the superior transparency of Greek, as we have it in the literature preserved to us, is due to the oral character of the literature. In works that are designed to be read, clearness is not so imperatively demanded as it is in works that reach an audience through its ears only. A reader, if he fails to catch the author's meaning at first, can read through the sentence again and again until he puzzles the meaning out. But an audience listening to an orator, a drama, or the recitation of any work, whether in prose or poetry, has no such opportunity. Consequently, the author's first business, if he wishes to retain the attention of the audience whose approval he is seeking, is to write in such a manner that he who listens can readily understand. Hence the rareness of paren-



theses in Greek, and the aversion to heaping up relative clauses, which necessarily have a looseness of connection, in which both author and audience have a tendency, which is difficult to obviate, to lose sight of the point of view from which the sentence started. Terseness, too was demanded of the Greek author, and was largely obtained by the use of participles. What with us becomes a causal, concessive, temporal, or hypothetical clause, was expressed in Greek by a participle. A marked feature of the Greek language is its extensive use of antithesis; the value of which for an oral literature is considerable. It substitutes for complex sentences simple ones; for a prolonged strain a short and easy appeal to the hearer's attention. To the general clearness of Greek literature there are two classes of exceptions. The first is constituted by the few authors who, like Thucydides, wrote to be studied in private, and not to be produced before the assembled public. The second consists of poetry, such as the choruses of plays and the lyric poetry of Pindar, which was destined to be produced with the most elaborate musical accompaniment known to the Greeks, and in which, accordingly, clearness of thought seems to have been subordinated to beauty of sound.

The second great quality of the Greek language is its life. The apparatus of terminations and inflections with which the language was extensively provided, and which could only be worked by means of a considerable attention to regularity, was never allowed to reduce the formation either of words or sentences to a merely mechanical process. In Latin literature the observance of the laws of the language was insisted on before everything. The Greeks pushed nothing to excess; nor did they sacrifice to monotonous regularity and dull formality the advantages which an independent exercise of reason might secure in the way of ease, grace, and variety. Hence we not only find that Herodotus frequently and unintentionally wanders off in a sentence which is perfectly transparent and intelligible, but which never comes to a strictly grammatical conclusion. We also find that anacolutha of this kind are deliberately introduced by Demosthenes to afford relief to perfect periods and artistically rounded sentences. The same tendency to set the spirit above the law of the language is seen in the Greek fondness for constructions in which greater regard is paid to the sense than to the grammatical structure of the sentence. The language is instinct with life; it never tolerates a mere automatic attention, it is transparent to those who will take the trouble to look through it, but it requires always "a seeing eye;" it is the pro-

duct of an intelligent people, and requires intelligence therefore to follow it. Greek thought played like lightning over the sentence while it was in course of formation, and frequently fused two sentences into one pregnant whole. Hence the attraction of the antecedent into the clause of the relative, the attraction of the relative to agree in case with the demonstrative pronoun, and in certain cases the disappearance of the demonstrative altogether.[1]

But the life there is in the Greek language must not be supposed to consist merely in violations of strict and formal grammar. The linguistic instinct of the Greeks allowed them only to pursue the somewhat dangerous path of departing from grammar so far as it led to increased vividness and ease without incurring the risk of unintelligibility. The most triumphant display of the quality we are considering occurs within the range of strict grammar: it consists in the development of the Greek particles. They are essentially the work of an intelligent people, and they require for their proper use an insight into the language which Aristotle remarked was not in his day usually possessed by foreigners. In reading a modern writer, it is very rarely that we find his words of themselves indicating on what part of the sentence he intended the stress to be laid; and the absence of such indication frequently leaves us, not perhaps in doubt as to his precise meaning, but in ignorance of the importance which a certain word is intended to have. The "forcible feeble" device of italics may in such a printed sentence as "He *said* so" be made to convey an imputation on the speaker's accuracy; but it ought to be possible to express this imputation by as slight a modification in the sentence as we make in the tone with which the sentence is pronounced. In Greek it can be done by the insertion of a particle of two letters. Nothing can testify more plainly to the habitual liveliness with which the Greeks spoke and thought than the fact that it modified their language so completely that every significant inflection of the voice could be reflected in the words of the sentence.

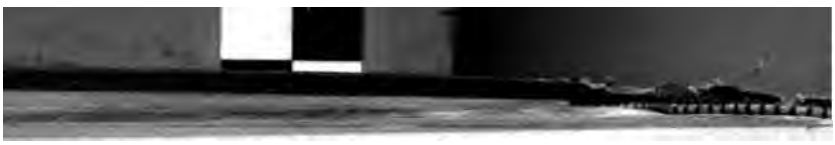
Hitherto we have considered the Greek language as a whole, but it was divided into dialects, and they played an important part in the literature of Greece. There were three main dialects, Doric, Ionic, and Æolic, and many varieties and sub-varieties of these. Indeed, each locality seems to have had peculiarities of speech, doubtless minute, distinguishing it from other localities

[1] Hence, too, the fusion of two strictly speaking incompatible points of view in such sentences as οἶσθ' ὃ δρᾶσον.



in which the same main dialect was spoken. The three main dialects were probably sprung from one common ancestor, but when the differentiation took place is unknown. The germs of the difference may have been in existence before Greek was a language by itself: the rise of the three dialects is certainly pre-historic. On the differences between them this is not the place to speak. It is sufficient for our purpose to say that Doric retained more of the old sounds belonging to the original language than the other dialects, and that changes and innovations were most frequent in Ionic. The difference corresponds with the difference in character between the conservative Dorians and the more progressive Ionians. The Dorians spoke, as in matters political and social they moved, slowly and deliberately. The Ionians, especially the Athenians, spoke rapidly and volubly. Accordingly, in Doric we find that the vowel sounds are broader and fuller, and the combinations of consonants require more effort to pronounce; while in Ionic the attrition of perpetual usage has worn down both classes of sound into greater flexibility. Ionic was therefore naturally the dialect for prose, as it was the dialect of the race in which discussion was most free and most frequent. Doric, on the other hand, seems to have been specially suited for musical accompaniment, and was the dialect in which lyric poetry was written.

With regard to the functions of the dialects in literature, it is generally said that each kind of literature continued to be composed in the dialect of the race which invented it. This with considerable modifications is true. The conditions which determined what kind of literature each race should produce would to a very large extent be the same as those which determined the dialect of the race; and consequently between the literature and the dialect of any place there would be an affinity and harmony which was not likely to escape the fine perception of the Greeks, nor to be violated by them. The best example is afforded by choral lyric, which, whether the poet who took it up came from Bœotia or from Ionia, and even when it was incorporated into the Attic drama, still continued to be composed in Doric. But even this example is not wholly satisfactory, for although Sparta was the place in which choral lyric received its earliest development, choral lyric was in no measure the work of Spartan poets. And in the next place, in the drama at least, the Doric of the choruses is not precisely Doric as it was ever spoken, but a conventional literary dialect, in which words were inserted borrowed from other dialects or invented by the poet himself. The dialect in which the Homeric poems



were composed was indeed followed, as being the proper dialect for epic poetry; but it probably also is a conventional dialect, used for literary purposes, and not anywhere used as the language of ordinary life. Of the three remaining kinds of literature, iambic poetry, personal lyrics, and prose, none retained its original dialect throughout its history. Personal lyric originated among the Æolians, but when transplanted to any other people, naturally took the dialect of the poet whose individual feelings it was employed to convey. Iambic poetry may be regarded as having originated in Paros through the genius of Archilochus, and for long it retained its native dialect. But when it was adopted by the Athenians for the dialogue of drama, it took the dialect used in ordinary life by the audience who heard it, and became Attic. In the same way, and for the same reasons, prose, which was the work of the Ionians in Asia Minor originally, and which for some time retained its native Ionic, was no sooner adopted by the Athenians than it became Attic itself. The chief instrument in the development of artistic prose was Athenian oratory; and it was impossible that the Athenians should transact their political discussions and cases at law in a dialect not their own. But in these cases, where a branch of literature was finally invested with a dialect other than that of the race which invented it, the change was amply justified by the result.

If the final elaboration of prose and of the iambic took place in Attic, it was partly because iambics and prose found the same conditions favourable to their development as favoured the development of the Attic dialect. What were these conditions? Mainly the native tendency of the Athenians to speak much and discuss everything. Perpetual use gave the polish, perpetual care the keenness, which, as an instrument of thought, their language possessed. These conditions are also obviously suitable to the development of prose in literature, and to the development of iambic poetry. Iambics are in poetry what prose is in literature. They are the vehicle for dialogue and discussion. They have the most affinity, as Aristotle pointed out, with the rhythm of ordinary conversation. They are framed by nature for pointed, terse, and telling blows, such as might be given by orators in debate. It is, therefore, by no accident that iambics were developed amongst a people who delighted in discussion, and no casual coincidence that the period of the drama was followed by that of the orators. The iambics of the stage had prepared the language, literature, and people for the oratory of the law-courts and the assembly.



Finally, as regards the language, its decay is instructive for the history of the literature. As the centralisation of literature in Athens facilitated its sudden fall, so the decay of the language was accelerated by the fact that Attic drove the other dialects out of the field. When Attic succumbed the other dialects had no recuperative forces to supply to the language, because Attic had already drained them of their vitality. Language and literature did indeed continue to exist for many centuries after the death of Demosthenes; but the literature was cosmopolitan, not specifically Greek, the language Hellenistic, not classical. For language and literature alike the price of dissemination was decay. The conditions which were indispensable, if the language and literature of Greece were to become universal, were fatal to their further development as purely Greek. The literature of Greece could only become the property of the whole civilised world when literature ceased to be diffused orally, and came to be spread by the multiplication of manuscripts; and, as we have seen already, the written communication of literature was inconsistent with that collective criticism of the people, whose function was to foster what was good and weed out what was bad. So, too, the language of Greece, or rather Attic, could only become universal in the ancient world by being in everybody's lips; and the language could not be used by foreigners of all kinds, and by people inferior in culture and intelligence to the Athenians without suffering.[1] Its two great qualities, clearness and life, are essentially due to the powers of reason which the Greeks pre-eminently possessed, developed by the continual contact of mind with mind. "Nothing but constant communion with his contemporaries could have produced [in an Athenian] that marvellous precision of language which is observable in Aristophanes, Plato, and the Orators."[2] This constant communion was impossible to foreigners, even when they possessed the natural powers of intellect which might have benefited thereby, and was forfeited by natives who, like Xenophon, spent much of their time abroad.

In fine, Greek literature was classical as long as it was oral. The character and extent of the audience addressed changed as social and political conditions changed. When the character and extent of the audience changed, fresh means of addressing it were discovered. The character and extent of the audience,

[1] Compare the remark of Aristotle's, referred to already, that foreigners could not master the use of the Greek particles.

[2] The *New Phrynichus*, p. 163.

together with the means adopted for addressing it, determined the form of the matter addressed to it. To the successive changes in the former correspond the successive forms of the literature—epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry, historical, oratorical, and philosophical prose. That is the history of Greek literature.

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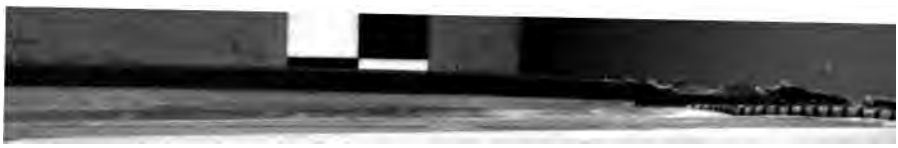
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